

1856-7.

VICTORIA.

## AMENDED REPORT

IN THE MATTER OF

# MR. RICHARD WOOLLEY.

*Presented by Mr. Moore to the Legislative Assembly, and ordered to be printed, 7th July, 1857.*

Office of Commissioner of Trade and Customs,  
Melbourne, 7th July, 1857.

SIR.

With reference to the letter of the 12th May, forwarding the Report of the Board appointed to enquire into certain charges preferred against Mr. Richard Woolley, I have the honor to forward you an Amended Report, which I am desired by the Board to request may be substituted for that previously transmitted, in consequence of an accidental omission of a paragraph which appears to them to be of importance in the case. The cause of the omission is explained in the prefatory remarks annexed.

C. 57 | 298.  
No. C. 57 | 222.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient Servant,  
JAMES McCULLOCH.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary,  
&c., &c., &c.

Melbourne, 6th July, 1857.

The Board appointed by His Excellency the Governor to investigate the conduct of Mr. Richard Woolley, in relation to certain charges made against him as Secretary to the Railway Trustees, having discovered the omission of a paragraph in the Report which they had the honor to transmit to His Excellency, and which was upon a subject of importance, beg to submit their Report as originally agreed upon.

9th May, 1857.

The Board deem it proper to mention that the paragraphs numbered in the Report were written upon separate pieces of paper, and attached together, and it was only on perusal of the printed copy that the Board observed that one of these (No. 4) was omitted, which must have been accidentally detached previous to being handed to the transcriber.

### R E P O R T .

After a careful and prolonged investigation it appears to them that the following circumstances are those which are amenable to question.

1. The circumstances connected with Mr. Miles obtaining his second or ballast contract.

The Board are of opinion that there is no foundation for imputing improper conduct to Mr. Woolley in relation to this matter.

2. Having money transactions with contractors and their sureties.

It appears, that with the persons referred to in the evidence, Mr. Woolley had had similar dealings previous to his being in Government employment.

With reference to them, and including Davis's affair, the Board are unable to trace any proof of bribery, but at the same time, they would express their disapprobation of a Government officer being implicated in such transactions with parties who are in the position of contractors and their sureties.

C.—No. 42\*.

3. As to obtaining a large sum of money without sanction of the trustees.

It seems that upon one occasion the trustees, not being expected to meet before the bank was closed, and a number of laborers being in want of payment from the contractor, who had failed, Mr. Woolley procured this money upon his own responsibility, expecting the sanction of the trustees. Some insuperable difficulties, however, prevented this being given, and the money was repaid into the bank. So far as appears to the Board, the intention expressed above was the only motive which actuated Mr. Woolley.

4. Of altering the contract deed of Miles after it was signed and sealed, in such a manner as to give the contractor a longer time than that agreed on in which to execute his contract.

Under ordinary circumstances this would be a clear advantage to the contractor or to his surety; but as it does not appear according to the evidence that in this particular instance any advantage would have accrued, the Board can find no proof of a corrupt motive. The Board, however, feel called on to reprehend in the strongest manner, the act of altering a deed after execution, especially where the party concerned was sole attesting witness. This proceeding the Board cannot but deem most improper and unbusiness like, and deserving of severe censure.

A. Enclosures 1,  
2, 3, 4, 5, 6.  
B. *Vide Minutes*  
of Evidence,  
18th April.  
C. Enclosures 7,  
8, 9.

We submit for His Excellency's perusal, the evidence (A), letters (B), and certain explanatory statements of Mr. Woolley (C), respecting the latter of which, the Board would observe that he alludes to certain opinions entertained by members of the Board, which allusions are not borne out, inasmuch as the Board carefully abstained from expressing any opinion whatever during the progress of the enquiry.

The Board cannot close their Report without adding that the inconsistent nature of the evidence of Mr. Davis leads them to the opinion that Mr. Hughes was fully warranted in taking the steps with reference to this subject which he thought proper to do.

AUGUSTUS F. A. GREEVES, CHAIRMAN,  
JAMES McCULLOCH,  
E. P. S. STURT, Resident Magistrate.