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VICTORIA.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS.

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# REPORT

ON THE

## PROPOSED RAILWAY

FROM

### FLEMINGTON BRIDGE TO PASCOE VALE;

TOGETHER WITH THE

### MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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*Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 11th November, 1891.*

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RAILWAYS STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT No. 4.—[1s.]



# THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS.

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## FLEMINGTON BRIDGE TO PASCOE VALE RAILWAY.

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### REPORT.

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THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS, to which the Legislative Assembly referred the proposed railway from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale, have the honour to report as follows:—

1. The Committee examined several witnesses on the proposed railway from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale, and their evidence is appended to this Report. Proceedings of the Committee. The Committee also inspected the district to be served by the line, with the view of making themselves acquainted with its settlement and surroundings.

2. The length of the proposed railway from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale referred to the Committee is four miles, and it has a ruling gradient of 1 in 50. It is estimated by the Railway Department to cost £93,211 for a single line of way, including £22,500 for “land and compensation.” Length and Cost of Line

3. The railway, as surveyed, branches off the Coburg line on the northern side of Flemington-bridge Station, and runs about midway between the Coburg and Essendon lines up the valley of the Moonee Ponds Creek, joining the North-Eastern Railway at Pascoe Vale. On leaving the Coburg line, the proposed railway descends into a small valley, but rises out of it rapidly, reaching the top of the hill at Brunswick-road. From this point to its terminus it traverses tolerably level country, keeping on the eastern, or Brunswick side of the creek for the greater part of the distance. The object of the line is to accommodate the residents of West Brunswick, and the people living on the western or Essendon side of the Moonee Ponds Creek. Provision was made in the estimate for three stations on the line, one being between Brunswick-road and Union-street, another at Victoria-street, and the third on the north side of Moreland-road. Route of Line.

4. In speaking of the population along the route of the proposed line Mr. Speight said in evidence—“The country at the Flemington-bridge end is getting “settled; the further you go out the less occupation there is upon it, but it is clearly a “suburban district, and when the time arrives for making the railway I have no doubt “there will be a traffic round it that will warrant its construction. At present the Settlement.

“settlement is not dense after, say, the first half-mile of the railway from Flemington-bridge. . . . The warrant for this line depends altogether upon the future settlement upon it ; any one that goes over the district will see that buildings are gravitating from the Coburg line and from the Essendon line, and that the country will some day be all filled up ; but it will take time. It is intended to accommodate that country for residential purposes ; there is nothing else on it, and eventually it will, no doubt, be fully occupied ; but I cannot say anything more about it than that its prospective value is all right.”

Population.

5. The population at present residing in West Brunswick and in the eastern portion of Essendon and Moonee Ponds to be served by the proposed railway is, according to the figures supplied by the Government Statist, over 2,600. Evidence was given that the district was advancing rapidly, nearly the whole of the population on the Brunswick side of the line, numbering 1,400, having settled there within the last five years. The Brunswick Council is engaged in making the streets leading to the sites of the stations, and is about to erect additional bridges over the Moonee Ponds Creek, which will enable those residing on the western side of the creek to readily gain access to those stations.

An Alternative Route to Melbourne.

6. The proposed line will afford an alternative and shorter route between Pascoe Vale and Spencer-street Station, and will be available in case of interruption or pressure of traffic on the Essendon Railway.

Land for Railway to be given free of Cost.

7. The land through which the line will run is for the most part held in comparatively large blocks for suburban land so near the city, and as that not required for railway purposes will be greatly enhanced in value by the making of the line, the Committee consider it essential that the whole of the land necessary for the construction of the railway should, before the line is made, be given to the Railway Department free of cost, and without any charge for severance. A number of the land-owners along the route have already offered to give whatever portion of their land is required for the proposed line free of cost, while others have limited their offer to a strip half-a-chain in width.

Reduction in Cost of Line.

8. The Committee received evidence from Mr. George McKenzie, C.E., Town Surveyor, Brunswick, that a considerable reduction could be made in the estimate of the Railway Department for the construction of the proposed railway. He stated, after going carefully into the matter and taking out his quantities from the sections used by the Department in the preparation of its estimate, that the line could be constructed for £23,338, exclusive of the cost of land. He added that he had allowed for fair prices in his calculations, and had taken the precaution to err on the safe side.

Decision of Committee.

9. The Committee have decided that the proposed line should be constructed at a cost not exceeding £30,000, and that the whole of the land required for railway purposes should be given to the Government free of cost, and without compensation for damage by severance.

Proceedings of Committee.

10. The following extract from the Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee shows the divisions that took place on the 10th November, 1891 :—

Mr. Melville moved, That in the opinion of the Committee it is expedient to construct a line of railway from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale, provided that the whole of the land required for railway purposes be given to the Government free of cost and without compensation for damage by severance, and that the cost of the line shall not exceed £30,000.

Mr. Zeal seconded the motion.

The Committee deliberated.

Mr. Taverner moved, as an amendment, That the consideration of the motion be deferred for a fortnight.

Mr. Groom seconded the amendment.

Amendment—put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 4.

Mr. Anderson,  
Mr. Groom,  
Mr. Taverner,  
Mr. A. Young.

Noes, 6.

The Chairman,  
Mr. Buchanan,  
Mr. Melville,  
Mr. Tucker,  
Mr. Woods,  
Mr. Zeal.

And so it passed in the negative.

Question—That in the opinion of the Committee it is expedient to construct a line of railway from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale, provided that the whole of the land required for railway purposes be given to the Government free of cost and without compensation for damage by severance, and that the cost of the line shall not exceed £30,000—put.

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 7.

The Chairman,  
Mr. Buchanan,  
Mr. Melville,  
Mr. Tucker,  
Mr. Woods,  
Mr. A. Young,  
Mr. Zeal.

Noes, 3.

Mr. Anderson,  
Mr. Groom,  
Mr. Taverner.

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

THOS. BENT,  
Chairman.

Parliament House,  
Melbourne, 11th November, 1891.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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# THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS.

## FLEMINGTON-BRIDGE TO PASCOE VALE.

# MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 1890.

*Members present:*

The Hon. T. BENT, in the Chair ;

The Hon. J. Buchanan,  
The Hon. H. Gore,  
Mr. Mason,  
Mr. McIntyre,  
The Hon. D. Melville,  
Mr. Taverner,

The Hon. A. L. Tucker,  
The Hon. J. Woods,  
Mr. A. Young,  
The Hon. G. Young,  
The Hon. W. A. Zeal.

Richard Speight, further examined.

\* \* \* \* \*

1. *By the Chairman.*—Now take the Pascoe Vale and Flemington-bridge line?—This is a line four miles in length ; it has a grade of 1 in 50, and its total estimated cost is £87,146, including £22,500 for land, an average of £21,787 per mile. The railway runs midway between the Essendon line and the present Coburg line. It starts from the Coburg line at Flemington-bridge, and forms a junction with the North-Eastern line at Pascoe Vale. The country at the Flemington-bridge end is getting settled; the further you go out the less occupation there is upon it, but it is clearly a suburban district, and when the time arrives for making the railway I have no doubt there will be a traffic round it that will warrant its construction. At present the settlement is not dense after, say, the first half-mile of the railway from Flemington-bridge, but a reference to the map will show you that the railway in that district will equally divide the country. There have been some offers on the part of land-owners about land, that is to say, to give land to enable the line to be made, but until the permanent survey was completed it would be difficult in a line of this character to say exactly the land that would be wanted, and therefore those offers do not convey anything definite, but I dare say when the permanent survey was made the parties who have made the offers would be willing to come to some terms.

2. What is meant by “surveyed” and “unsurveyed”?—When I say “permanent survey” I mean the survey that actually fixes the exact course of the line. At present the data in the possession of the department gives an idea of the course, but you might deviate a little to one side or the other, and where you have land in relatively small holdings, as you have here, you might have a line not going through the property of some one who was offering you land when you finally fix the permanent survey, therefore I do not put the offer of the land for much at present ; it would depend upon further negotiation whether it was worth considering or not. The warrant for this line depends altogether upon the future settlement upon it ; any one that goes over the district will see that buildings are gravitating from the Coburg line and from the Essendon line, and that country some day will be all filled up, but it will take time. It is intended as a line to accommodate that country for residential purposes, there is nothing else on it, and eventually it will, no doubt, be fully occupied, but I cannot say anything more about it than that its prospective value is all right.

3. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—The settlement in this quarter has no means of getting to town at all except they take the Coburg line or Essendon line?—It is a wide district, and this additional line properly divides the district.

4. You have a deed in your possession binding the parties to give the land, in fact they have made it over, have they not?—Yes. The land-owners have offered the department land ; some of them limit the width of the land, some do not, but it would be unwise to make a bargain with any one until the permanent survey was fixed, because it might be outside the offers, and some of their offers might be of land that was not included in the survey.

5. With one or two exceptions the list is complete ; you have the land all handed over, have you not?—About three-quarters of the length I should think ; a portion of it passes through the Royal Park.



6. They have bound themselves by legal deed to give the land?—Yes, they have bound themselves in this way: they say, "We will give you the land"; but some of them have limited the width to half-a-chain. We went into this to see if we could definitely fix it up, but we felt it would not be safe to do so until we have a permanent survey.

7. Will you produce that deed?—I will send it in.

8. *By the Chairman.*—The four miles cost £21,787 per mile, and you have land offered for £22,500?—Yes. If the land offered fits in with the permanent survey the chances are that may be reduced by £15,000, bringing it down to £72,000 for the whole line.

9. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—Will you give us the estimated cost?—The earthworks cost £12,800, ranging from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. per yard; the bridges, £19,000. Those are the principal items; ballast, £2,500; sleepers, £2,850; three temporary stations, £4,000.

10. The total cost, in such a country, appears very large; in fact, it is almost level country for three-quarters of the way. Is there no way of reducing it?—I do not think so. What I should suggest is, that you see the plan and section of the line; you can judge for yourselves, but it is the officer who prepared the estimates that can give you all the particulars as to how those amounts are arrived at. Those estimates are framed upon the actual work to be done, as near as you can get it, and the experience of prices that have had to be paid.

11. Is there any parallel case where you have had the cost of construction in such country—say the original Coburg line, which would be a much more expensive one to construct?—I can get it for you. I have no doubt it cost quite as much as that.

12. Has anything occurred since you made up these estimates that would modify them?—No.

13. The state of the labour market?—I do not think so.

14. The inhabitants asked Mr. Robb and Mr. Thornton what they would estimate such a line at. Would their evidence be of any value?—I think so.

15. They said that a single line with temporary stations could be constructed at about £3,000 a mile?—I could not imagine that the line could be constructed through there for £3,000 a mile. I should say it would be utterly impossible to construct it for such a price, knowing the country as I do. In fact, if you look at the section, you will see what it is; there is no more work in it than is absolutely necessary. It is all calculated out according to exact quantities, and at prices that we know will have to be paid. How can we take any other data than that?

16. You estimate the earthworks at 1s. 6d. per yard?—Earthworks in cuttings 2s. 6d., side-ditches and roads 1s. 6d., station grounds 2s.; that is £3,000 a mile in itself.

17. Cannot work of that kind be done in moderate quantities at from 6d. to 8d. per cubic yard?—No, it would not be possible.

18. We have the brickyards doing work, excavating work is being done in that neighbourhood—are you sure that that estimate is not a misleading one both to you and to the Committee?—As to the details of this estimate I should prefer your asking those who compiled it, so that they may explain how it is arrived at. I do not pretend to know what the lead of that stuff is, where it is to be put; there may be reasons to explain those prices. They are based upon similar conditions to those which had to be paid for under open competition. The officer who made those calculations is the person to explain them.

19. To move a cubic yard of surface clay in that neighbourhood would cost 2s. 6d.; does it not appear that that would be an extraordinary price?—It depends where you have to take it to.

20. On the question of cost of land, if this is deferred for four or five years, would you form any opinion as to what position you would be in in buying the land then, how would the cost of the land be increased?—No doubt, the longer the lines are delayed in construction in the neighbourhood of Melbourne more will have to be paid for land, but what will have to be paid for land five years hence I should not like to say.

21. Have you any suburban lines so near the city that will approach this at all in mileage; you have an offer there of three-fourths of the land, and possibly the other fourth may be given—I think where people come in and offer their land for nothing, and a satisfactory arrangement is made, it is a matter for consideration; it is an additional reason why their request for the railways should be favorably considered. If you get the land for nothing, it shows the parties wanting the railway are willing to contribute to the cost of the accommodation they require.

22. This accommodates both the east side of Essendon and the extreme west side of Brunswick?—I think the district eventually will be a good district, but, as regards the people on it, at present it is not fully occupied; but it is clearly residential land, and will come into the market, and will be so used in the next few years.

23. And for brickworks?—Yes.

24. In fact it touches the Hoffman Brick Company on the west side; they own a portion of it?—Yes, the Hoffman Brick Company is close to it.

25. *By the Chairman.*—Would it be any use to the department in addition to the traffic referred to?—No, I do not think there is any departmental necessity for it as affording an alternative route; the Somerton line comes in a little higher up. You were asking about the line from North Melbourne to Coburg; that line is 2½ miles double, and 2¾ miles single, and it cost £178,000 altogether.

26. That is for land as well?—Yes.

27. What is the cost of land alone?—I have not got that.

28. I meant the average cost of construction only in any contract that we have actually let?—The question you asked was if we had any experience of lines in that neighbourhood that cost so much per mile as this is estimated to cost; this North Melbourne to Coburg line is five miles in the same kind of country.

29. Do you know whether there are the same gradients and cuttings in this line as on the proposed line?—No; the works are heavier than on the Flemington line, but it cost £14,000 a mile more, and the Coburg line has had accommodation put on it since it was opened, which does not go as far as this; but to account for this line costing £21,000 a mile, here is a line in the neighbourhood that costs £35,000 a mile.

30. *By the Hon. W. A. Zeal.*—Supposing the inhabitants were to make an offer to the Government of the land on the line, either free or at a very advantageous price, would you under those circumstances

recommend its construction?—I do not know that I should recommend its early construction; it is a line that is included in the list, and under those conditions I think it should be favorably considered.

31. Seeing there is a large traffic through Moonee Ponds and Ascot Vale into Melbourne, could this be utilized to ease that traffic?—It forms a loop line, and it is available in case of interruption on the other line, and to that extent it would be departmentally beneficial, but I should not put the necessity of the line on that ground. The only ground for its construction is that it goes through country that must become residential, that owners of the property are willing to give the land, and that if they give a substantial concession in that way it is a matter for favorable consideration, but not preferential consideration.

32. Would it not be a more direct approach to Melbourne than coming round by Essendon, assuming these maps to be correct?—There is a bend in the Essendon line, but I do not think there is much in that.

33. Supposing in the future this became a densely-populated neighbourhood, would it be advisable, seeing that this land can now be got on reasonable terms, for the department to take powers to construct that line?—I should certainly think so, but I do not look upon it as one of the early lines.

34. *By Mr. Taverner.*—I understand that you say there is no departmental necessity for getting on to the North-Eastern line at Pascoe Vale. Under those circumstances, how do you think a line such as the one indicated in black in the plan there would serve in a largely-populated district—[*handing a plan to the witness*]?—It goes nearer to the Coburg line, the red line forming a junction at Pascoe Vale; it is not a detriment to it that it forms a junction, but as to the question whether the line should turn a few chains to one side or the other, I do not know that it is material. I would prefer to have the line connected at both ends than have a dead-ended line. I believe all that country from Coburg to Essendon will be filled with buildings in time.

35. Then you do not think it would be advisable to have some inquiries in that direction?—There can be no objection to make the inquiry; I have no doubt that we have information in the department that would enable something to be said about that line.

36. *By the Hon. G. Young.*—You gave us an estimate of £19,000 for a bridge on that line?—A series of bridges.

37. Crossing the Moonee Ponds Creek?—Yes.

38. Could you not avoid that by coming away to the right?—There is the Moonee Ponds Creek to start with just out of Flemington.

39. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—It does not cross the creek until you get to Pascoe Vale?—The £19,000 is for crossing the creek and the road bridges and everything.

40. *By the Hon. G. Young.*—The surveyor who prepared the section could inform us if the number of bridges could be lessened by varying the route?—He can give any information of that kind.

41. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know if the council of the district have asked for certain works to be done?—Not yet.

\* \* \* \* \*

John Wood Fleming, sworn and examined.

42. *By the Chairman.*—Will you be kind enough to tell us all you know?—I have not a written statement. This is a statement I made out myself—[*producing a document*]—since the last day I was here, just showing the amount of valuation and the increase of population, the distance of the line from Flemington-road to Pascoe Vale, the amount of cost per acre, and also the amount of land you would receive for nothing, and increase of population since 1888. I am giving it you in the three wards. The valuation of the property in the South ward in 1888 was £12,651; in 1890–91 it was £24,440, showing an increase of £11,789. The population in 1888 was 1,272; in 1890–91 it was 2,520, showing an increase of 1,248. The number of houses in 1888 on the south side of the western portion of our boundary was 318; in 1890–91 it was 574, showing an increase of 256. I put down the valuation of the land from Park-street to Union-street at the rate of £600 to £700 an acre; from Union-street to Dawson-street that land has been promised by an agreement to be handed over to the Government free of cost. That is the South ward. In the Middle ward the valuation of property in 1888 was £7,436; in 1890–91 it was £13,274, making an increase of £5,838. The population in 1888 was 536, and in 1890–91 it was 976, showing an increase of 440. The number of houses in 1888 was 134; in 1890–91 it was 271, showing an increase of 137. I put the valuation from Dawson-street to Victoria-street as from £200 to £300 per acre, and a great portion of that is given—a grant by a contract to give for nothing. I think all the department would have to purchase would be about an acre and a half, and, of course, you could not expect small people to give up their land for nothing. That I put down at from £200 to £300. In the North ward the valuation in 1888 was £9,880; in 1890–91 it was £23,710, an increase of £13,830. The population in 1888 was 864; in 1890–91 it was 2,036, showing an increase of 1,172. The number of houses in 1888 was 288; in 1890–91 it was 672, showing an increase of 384. From Victoria-street to Moreland-road, that is my boundary, you would have to buy about an acre and a half, and I have put that down at from £100 to £300.

43. How much altogether?—About 10 acres.

44. How many thousand pounds?—Take the average, about £5,000.

45. You are putting down that, but I do not know how you get at the value. There is a little bit, I dare say you know where I mean?—I think you mean a bit that belongs to the chief ruler of the city.

46. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Who is that?—Mr. FitzGibbon. From £200 to £300 an acre. The increase in all the wards since 1888 is about £31,457—that is of valuation; the increase of the population has been 2,860, and number of properties 777. Then, from the railway station at Flemington-bridge to Park-street, a distance of 61 chains 31 links, that, I presume, the Government will give nothing for—it is Crown lands. From that point to Brunswick-road is 4 chains. That is included in the valuation of the property from £600 to £700. From Brunswick-road to Union-street you would have to buy about 2 acres. From Union-street to Dawson-street is given free. Union-street is the dividing line, and the land Mrs. Daley's; that is Mr. FitzGibbon's from the dividing line, and Mrs. Daley's to Hunter-street is also given for nothing. Then you come within about half-an-acre, which you would have to purchase.

*The witness withdrew.*

*Adjourned.*

THURSDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER, 1891.

*Members present:*

The Hon. T. BENT, in the Chair;

The Hon. W. Anderson,  
The Hon. J. Buchanan,  
The Hon. H. Gore,  
Mr. Groom,  
Mr. McIntyre,  
The Hon. D. Melville,

Mr. Taverner,  
The Hon. A. L. Tucker,  
The Hon. J. Woods,  
Mr. A. Young,  
The Hon. G. Young,  
The Hon. W. A. Zeal.

George McKenzie, sworn and examined.

47. *By the Chairman.*—What are you?—Civil engineer and town surveyor of Brunswick. I have a certificate from the Melbourne University, and a certificate of competency under the Local Government and Irrigation Acts.

48. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—In what other district have you been?—I was in Beechworth for some years.

49. *By the Chairman.*—What do you wish to tell the Committee regarding this proposed line from Flemington-bridge to Pascoe Vale—have you seen the specifications or plans of the proposed lines?—Yes. I made an estimate of the lines as far as I can gather from the tracing I have seen, and my estimate, including the cost of land for station purposes, is £6,864 per mile, or a total cost for the 3 miles 32·1 chains of £23,338.

50. Have you gone through it carefully?—Yes.

51. Do you think the line can be constructed for that sum?—Yes. I have gone to the trouble of getting all the prices. I have put in fair prices.

52. Exclusive of land?—Exclusive of land, except for station purposes.

53. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—How much do they want for that?—I calculate that at £2,000. The cost of construction, including the engineering, is £6,864.

54. *By the Chairman.*—What are the earthworks and cuttings?—£695 per mile—1s. to 1s. 6d. a yard.

55. As an engineer, you say it can be done for that?—We have never paid as much for deep cuttings in the same locality.

56. How much for side cuttings and back cuttings?—One shilling a yard.

57. Side ditches and creek diversions?—One shilling.

58. Station grounds?—One shilling and sixpence.

59. Metalling?—Seven shillings a yard.

60. Ballast?—That includes ballast and metalling.

61. How many yards of ballast and metalling have you got?—One thousand four hundred and thirty yards to the mile.

62. Somebody must be wrong—[*looking at the departmental estimate*]. Would 800 yards do for a mile?—I think so.

63. How many inches of ballast?—Nine inches.

64. You do not propose gravelling roads?—No.

65. How do you arrive at that quantity?—By taking the length and the width of the formation, and so on.

66. What have you got down for sleepers?—Four shillings and sixpence each.

67. What kind of sleeper do you give for that?—Box or redgum.

68. And you say you can do it for £23,338?—Yes.

69. How much do you say for works for making the line, without regard to land at all?—I have not taken it for the whole length, but it is £6,264 per mile.

70. Do you provide stations and water supply?—That is exclusive of water supply.

71. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—The Yan Yean is there?—The Yan Yean is there.

72. The ballast appears to be a very fair price—what is your contract for ballast this year?—About 5s. 4d. a yard.

73. Could you not deliver at the same price?—There is the cost of putting it on. My estimate includes laying it on.

74. About the improvements of the roads to the line—you are making your streets in that direction, or are they made?—Half are made to the line and past it.

75. You will be able to close up some of those streets?—Several that I notice that have gates on on the departmental plan are not being used at the present time.

76. Is the district advancing?—Yes, rapidly. The present population on our side, within a distance at which people would use the railway, is 1,300.

77. At what rate is the population advancing; is it growing there rapidly—are they building there?—Not at present.

78. You have had a big jump?—Nearly the whole population has settled there within the last five years.

79. *By the Chairman.*—What have you got for bridges?—Bridges, including culverts, £1,200 a mile.

80. Can you account for anybody putting down £20,000 for those on that line?—No, I consider the water-way provided on the Government plan altogether excessive. They have 90 feet of water-way in length over a creek, where we have 10 feet a little higher up.

81. They have too much down here?—They could be built for £3,500, say.

82. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Do you say if you were asking for contracts to be taken for that work, that it could be done at your estimate?—Yes, I believe so.

83. You think it could be done for the amount you now state?—Yes, and leaving the contractor room to make a profit.

84. As to water-way?—I recommended some of the bridges to be built of wood, and I estimated accordingly. Their water-way is excessive in every case.

85. What is the character of your work as compared with the Government's?—The work is on the same lines as the Government's, only I had no information in regard to the bridges.

86. You mean you do not know the class of material to be used?—No.

87. Are all your bridges of wood?—Except those through the Royal Park. I have estimated those as iron; they are overhead bridges.

88. *By Mr. Woods.*—What sized metal have you estimated for the line?—Two and a half inches.

89. Suppose you were to pitch the line with 6-in. pitchforks, spawls we will call them, and use  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in. metal on top, what difference would that make in the price?—It would bring it down to 4s. 6d., about.

90. Would it make a better line?—I do not think so.

91. We have found it so where we have tried it?—Your experience may be better than mine.

92. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Have you had any experience of railway construction at all?—No.

93. Not any?—No.

94. *By the Hon. H. Gore.*—Did you take the same quantities as the Government?—I have taken them off the Government tracing—I have not seen their quantities—I took their sections as nearly as I could. There are no figures on that that would assist one.

95. You just took it from scale?—Yes.

96. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—How much has the corporation spent in your time upon works you have supervised?—£160,000.

97. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Suppose you were employed to do this work, do you think you have really taken into consideration everything, and that you could complete it for that money?—I think so, except any works outside of the boundary of the line—anything in the way of land the Railway Department intend to take.

98. *By Mr. Woods.*—Have you taken outside the fences?—No.

99. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Would you be prepared, if you were employed by a railway company, to construct this line for that?—Yes, I think so.

100. Notwithstanding that you have no knowledge of railway work?—I think I have taken the precaution to err on the safe side in my estimate.

101. Is it necessary to have a knowledge of railway construction, more than you have now, to build a railway line?—No; I have nothing further than practical observation to guide me, but I would be prepared to take the construction of the railway, and to undertake it on my estimate.

102. There is nothing special then in the work of a railway engineer?—No.

103. *By the Chairman.*—Have you included the rails in your estimate?—They are £1,100 a mile.

104. For how many miles?—Three decimal four miles.

105. What rails are you giving us?—Seventy lbs.

106. Will it not be necessary, where it is a double line, to do more than three miles. Here in this estimate they give us 5.25 miles. You see they want a double line at certain places, and sidings for working the traffic?—I give 3.4 miles.

107. *By Mr. McIntyre.*—Would those extra lines be necessary?—I do not think so, on that particular line, considering the length of it.

108. *By Mr. Groom.*—How many stations have you?—Three.

109. Whereabouts?—One at Union-street, one at Victoria-street, and one at Albion-street.

110. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think they have located the line in the best spot?—I think the line is very well chosen.

111. *By Mr. Groom.*—What grades have you got?—I have taken the Government section.

112. What is the Government grade?—One in 50.

113. *By the Hon. D. Melville.*—The bulk of that line is within your own territory?—Yes, the most of it.

114. A territory you are overlooking every day?—Yes.

*The witness withdrew.*