

APPENDIX K.

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED RAILWAYS IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF THE MIDDLE ISLAND.

The ENGINEER in CHARGE, Middle Island, to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Dunedin, 21st June, 1879.

In accordance with your instructions I have the honor to submit the following report on the proposed railways in the northern districts of the Middle Island:—

STATE OF SURVEYS.

The Provincial Government of Canterbury made reconnaissance and preliminary surveys of several lines to connect the East and West Coasts, and the whole of the country north and west of Amberley has been well explored during the past four years by Mr. Foy and other engineers employed by the General Government. The results of these surveys have from time to time been laid before the Assembly; and all the principal lines are shown on Mr. Foy's map lately issued, and the map attached to my annual report for this year. The following is a list of the various lines that have been examined:—

WEST COAST LINES—

1. *Browning's Pass Route*.—By the Rakaia and Hokitika or Arahura Rivers.
2. *Taipo Route*.—By the Waimakariri, Taipo, and Teremakau Rivers to the coast, with an alternative line by Lake Brunner.
3. *Arthur's Pass Route*.—By the Waimakariri, Bealey, Otira, and Teremakau Rivers to the coast, with an alternative line by Lake Brunner.
4. *Poulter's Pass Route*.—By the Waimakariri, Poulter, and Teremakau Rivers.
5. *Hurunui Route*.—From Amberley through the Weka Pass; thence by the Hurunui and Teremakau Rivers to the coast; with an alternative line by Lake Brunner.
6. *Hope Route*.—By the Weka Pass to the Hurunui, up the Hurunui to Lake Sumner; thence by the Kiwi, Hope, Tutaekuri, and Ahaura Valleys to Brunnerton; with alternative lines *viâ* Nelson Creek and the Arnold.
7. *Hanmer Plains Route*.—By the Weka Pass and Hurunui Plains to the Waiau River, up the Waiau to the Hope, and up the Hope to the Kiwi, where it merges into the Hope route.
8. *Amuri Pass Route*.—This is an alternative to the Hanmer Plains route. It leaves the latter at the confluence of the Hope with the Boyle, and follows up the Boyle and Doubtful, rejoining at the confluence of the Tutaekuri and the Ahaura.
9. *Cannibal Gorge Route*.—This route is common to the last two until the Doubtful is reached. It then follows the Doyle, Lewis, and Maruia and Grey Rivers, with an alternative line *viâ* Reefton.

MAIN TRUNK LINES FROM EAST COAST—

1. *Coast Route*.—By the Omihi or Waikari Valleys to the Hurunui; thence by Cheviot and Hawkeswood to the coast at Oara, along the coast to the Ure River, and by the Dashwood Pass to Blenheim.
2. *Green Hills Route*.—By the Hurunui Plains, Waiau Township, and Green Hills to Kaikoura, where it joins the coast route.
3. *Awatere Route*.—By the Hurunui Plains and Waiau and Awatere Rivers, with one alternative joining the Wairau route through Travellers' Valley, and another reaching Blenheim by the Avon Pass and Waiopai River.
4. *Wairau Route*.—Leaving the Awatere route at the Hanmer Plains, and going by the Upper Clarence and Wairau Rivers to Blenheim, with one alternative from Tophouse to Nelson.

MAIN TRUNK LINES FROM WEST COAST—

5. *Maruia Route*.—From Brunnerton by Kopara Lake, the Nancy, Upper Grey, Maruia, Matakitaiki, Buller, and Northern Hope Rivers to Foxhill, with one alternative by Tophouse to Foxhill, and another by Tophouse and the Wairau to Blenheim.
6. *Grey Valley Route*.—From Brunnerton by the Grey, Inangahua, and Buller to the Matakitaiki Junction, where it merges into the Maruia route.

In addition to the above main routes there are numerous combinations of lines and minor alternatives; but their consideration here will tend to complicate the question, without serving any good purpose, so I shall only refer to them in detail when required.

So far as I am aware, the surveys hitherto have not been made simply with the view of providing communication between certain places. Although this was one of the objects, they are mainly useful in ascertaining where lines can be taken, and thus forming a basis for designing a railway system for the whole of the northern end of the Middle Island.