

In conclusion I may say that, although the length I have referred to is considered to be the poorest on the line, I am satisfied that when it is opened up and settled the traffic will prove that a railway was required and will pay independently of the through-traffic. The tapping of the Wanganui River at Taumarunui, and the opening-up of the Ruapehu and Tongariro Mountains, and the thermal wonders there and at Tokaanu, will certainly induce a large stream of tourist traffic.

It may not be known to your Committee that the road from Stratford towards the Main Trunk Railway (known as the East road) is now fit for coach traffic for fully eighty-five miles out of a total of 103 miles, and coaches are now running on it for a distance of over fifty miles from the Taranaki end, and it would greatly help the railway traffic if the central part of the road (some eighteen miles, and on which some work is now on hand) was pushed ahead at once, so as to have it completed by the time the rails reach the point of divergence at Kawakawa.

I have been living in and about the King country for the past twenty-six years, and have had very considerable experience in breaking in new country, and consider myself a judge of country in its natural state.

I am, &c.,

J. W. ELLIS.

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