

91. But you were three weeks doing nothing?—We were there from the commencement of June to the middle of August. We ought to have pretty well knocked the bush down, and we would have done so had it not been for the reports that the Government were going to take it.

92. What had the reports to do with you?—Well, they had nothing to do with us; but we did not work the same way as we would otherwise have worked.

93. But you knew well enough that you would get paid for the time that you were working. Why did you not go on in the ordinary way?—We did not know who would have to pay us.

94. That was immaterial so long as you were paid?—That is so.

95. You think that half the underscrubbing was done?—I should say it was, but I am only speaking at random.

96. What would it be worth to underscrub?—It would be worth about half to underscrub. We generally allow a third, but this was very heavy.

97. You did two half-days at bushfalling?—Yes.

98. Well, then, really there would not be more than about two or three acres?—Two or three acres in two half-days?

99. Or even less?—Even less.

100. When you found out you had made a mistake as to what you stated, why did you not send to the Department instead of going and seeing Mr. Walsh about it?—Simply because I did not know where to write to, or anything about it. I asked him whether I should write. I knew nothing about it.

101. Why was the stipulation that young Walsh should be in the contract, do you know?—You mean for the three of us to work together?

102. Yes. Was it compulsory that he should be in the contract?—I do not think it was compulsory. That I cannot understand at all. I was a stranger and was staying at Eltham, and the man I was working with told me that he might get it, providing he took Mr. Walsh's son in with it.

103. Was he as good a man at bush-work as yourself and mate?—It was his first time, and every man has to learn his trade; but he was really good as a youngster.

104. Was Mr. Walsh with you while you were doing the scrub-cutting?—He was out three or four times.

105. On each occasion your mate was absent?—Yes, he was absent.

106. Then, you were not really working all the time you were supposed to be working?—We were working, but not in the way we should have been working.

107. Killing time instead of trees?—That is it, killing time.

108. *Mr. Bennet.*] How many days were you there, including the time you were doing nothing?—I could not say definitely.

109. *Mr. Flatman.*] The money you received was not in any way connected with your mate's earnings?—No; the money received was my own.

110. And that store account you were paying was not in conjunction with your mate?—We were all in the store account. The difference between the £21 and the £25 was my share of the bill.

111. And when you calculated it up at the end of your contract you considered you had earned a shilling an hour?—I considered I had earned a shilling an hour.

112. And you got it whether you had earned it or not?—Yes, whether I had earned it or not.

113. *Mr. Lang.*] I would like to ask one question in connection with this matter. Did you make the statement that you had been paid a shilling an hour wages, or that you had earned a shilling an hour?—The statement I made was this: I said "I have got about a shilling an hour."

114. You did not say that was for day wages?—No. I said, "I got a shilling an hour." Those are the words I made use of.

115. During the time you were supposed to be working?—Yes.

116. *Mr. EU.*] Did you make this statement to Mr. Skinner—the man you say overhauled you—that it was stipulated that you should take Walsh's son in as a partner?—No. I do not think that was stipulated; but the man who signed the contract, Williams, said, "We will have to take Walsh's son in with us." That is all I know.

117. Was this Williams on the ground at all?—Yes, he was on the ground two or three times. He lost a lot of time over it, and he used to say, "What is the good of starting?"

118. Did Williams do any actual work on the place at all?—I think about three days.

119. There is a statement here that you paid for some stores?—I did not.

120. Then, if the storekeeper says that you paid for the stores in cash yourself, you say that is incorrect?—Yes. I paid Bethune, but I was then on other work. That had nothing to do with this work.

121. Then, if the storekeeper says it was during the time you were falling this bush it is incorrect?—It would be incorrect.

122. You say that you were paid by cheque?—I stated that I was paid by cheque.

123. There is a document here in Mr. Walsh's evidence which states, "Settlement for contract for bushfalling,—Will you take £21 cash and I will pay all store accounts?—Answer (J. Sherwood): Yes" ?—I do not quite understand.

124. *The Chairman.*] Are you quite sure, Mr. Sherwood, that the amount you received was £21?—The amount that I received for the contract was £21 8s.—that is, taking into consideration the little things I left behind and which were allowed for.

125. And was that paid by cheque?—No. Part by cheque. I think there was £10 8s. by cheque and there was £11 in notes.

126. *Mr. Symes.*] Did you know this man who interviewed you?—No.

127. Did he tell you why it was he wanted to interview you?—Not at first. He told me afterwards.

128. How did he approach you?—I was standing looking out from a publichouse door, and he came and asked me, "Is your name Sherwood?" I said "Yes." Then he said, "Were you