

31. You understand that in—I think it was—1902 there was an authorisation fixing the line to Maungaturoto?—Yes.

32. That was, of course, on the advice of the engineers at that time?—Yes, I suppose so.

33. Were you in favour of that being done? Were you ever consulted about it?—That was fixed on Mr. Knorpp's survey, not on mine.

34. There was another authorisation in 1904, to Maungatapere boundary, I think?—That probably also was on Mr. Knorpp's survey. He was the only man who ever went over the whole route.

35. There has really been no detailed survey of either route beyond Maungaturoto?—The detailed survey had not reached Maungaturoto when I was there. We had got as far as Brynderwin, and came out at the Mountain Creek. That was the end of our detail.

36. You know the country all along there?—A little.

37. The country up as far as Pukekaroro, where the line goes through—what class of country is that, from an agricultural point of view?—It is good land.

38. And then when you pass Pukekaroro you go through a gorge to Brynderwin?—Yes.

39. What distance would that be, from Pukekaroro to Brynderwin?—It is no great distance.

40. About a mile and a half?—Something like that, I should think.

41. When you come into Brynderwin you come into really good country, do you not?—Brynderwin is good land.

42. Maungaturoto is all good country?—Yes.

43. It is good country right to the tunnel at the Staircase?—Yes.

44. And then you go along the side of a range a little further on, do you not?—I do not know anything about that.

45. You know that the country which the line passes through, except a short distance from Pukekaroro to Brynderwin, is good country?—Yes.

46. And there is considerable population to the eastward of that—down at Mangawai and Kaiwaka?—I never went into the question of population.

47. If you were surveying a line through that country for a company or any concern apart from the Government, which route do you think you would adopt, from your knowledge of the country?—I should like to have some more surveys. I have not seen the completed surveys of the two routes yet.

48. You cannot really give any idea as to the cost of either route?—I am not prepared to give any idea.

49. Mr. Stewart, of Auckland, gave some evidence before this Committee, and he was accused of guessing. Do you think the engineers have done much more than guess at it themselves so far?—They have preliminary surveys of a good deal of the route.

50. I mean beyond Young's Point?—They can do more than guess, of course.

51. Slightly more, but they—?—But they cannot give you the details of it.

52. Would you be surprised if Mr. Holmes stated that the western route as far as McCarroll's Gap would cost £10,000 more than the eastern route?—I should be quite prepared to back up anything Mr. Holmes said. I have great faith in Mr. Holmes.

53. In laying a trunk railway through the northern peninsula, do you not think it is a wise thing to keep as near the centre of the peninsula as possible and far away from waterways?—That is a matter of policy, is it not? I am hardly in a position to answer your question.

54. From a business point of view, do you not think it would be sensible to keep as near the centre as possible, and send out branches to the various lines?—Possibly.

55. *Mr. Stallworthy.* When you were in Auckland there had been no survey whatever of the western route?—A trial survey had been made to Bickerstaffe—about two or three miles on the Bickerstaffe Settlement.

56. Nothing beyond?—Well, there was a flying survey—a walk-over, as we call it.

57. You had no data, really, to compare the cost of the eastern and the western routes?—No. That was not available till after I left Auckland.

58. How far is it from the point of divergence to Bickerstaffe?—About eight miles.

59. And you have no knowledge of the country beyond that?—I went about two miles on the Bickerstaffe Estate—about two miles beyond Young's Point.

60. I think you stated just now that no other engineer or surveyor than Mr. Knorpp had been over the routes?—Mr. Knorpp made the original flying survey of the North Auckland route.

61. And you made no subsequent one?—We followed pretty much on his lines. We were instructed to do so.

62. How long ago was Mr. Knorpp's flying survey made?—It was in 1878 or 1879—perhaps a little later.

63. Up till the time that you left Auckland you had received no instructions—except as to this walk-over—to survey the western route, or to look into it?—Yes; I have already told you that we carried it on to Bickerstaffe.

64. That is only a very small proportion?—At that time the objective was Maungaturoto. We did not go beyond Maungaturoto till after I left there. Then the question of the further extension was dealt with.

65. How far is the eastern route from Maungaturoto Post-office?—About a mile and a quarter or a mile and a half.

66. How far would the western route be from the Maungaturoto Post-office?—Which western route? The western route has been changed from when I was there. It used to join the eastern route at the Golden Stairs, as they call it.

67. Then you do not know the western route of the present?—The western route of the present is a different line. The distance from Maungaturoto Post-office would be about four miles, I think.

68. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.* As far as you recollect, Mr. Knorpp's survey of this route was made in 1878 or 1879?—In 1879 or 1880, I think.