

to pay for the work and other outgoings. I hope you will be able to have at least £10,000 advanced to relieve the tension of the present position. The deputation consisted of the strike leaders and the members of the Remuera Road Board. Kindly let me have a reply as early as you can, which I may use.—J. G. FINDLAY.”

102. Whom was it addressed to?—The Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.

103. How long was that before the general election?—About five weeks. The first ballot was on the 7th December, and the second on the 14th.

104. What is the mark on that telegram?—“Urgent, J. W. Poynton, for remarks.—J.G.W.”

105. In whose writing is the word “urgent”?—It is either Sir Joseph’s or Mr. Hislop’s, the private secretary. It came to me and I wrote, “Reply for signature attached.”

106. What is the reply?—The reply was prepared by the clerk, Mr. Martin, and I added something on to it after asking him what the position was. The skeleton reply of the clerk in Mr. Martin’s handwriting is, “J. G. Findlay, Auckland.—As special rate struck for water-supply loan is only sufficient security for £42,000, instead of £44,000 applied for on present valuation, this amount will be available for expenditure after being finally approved on Monday next. Debentures will be posted on Monday. Plan of district required, in case of drainage loan of £40,000 not yet forwarded by Road Board. Was wired for yesterday.”

107. Was that the telegram that was actually sent in reply?—No. Sir Joseph Ward added on something. Some one must have interviewed him, probably when the clerk went along.

108. Read what was added to it?—I have read the telegram as it left me, and the words added were, “Cannot advance £10,000, but as debentures for amount of loan authorized will be forwarded on Monday, that should be quite satisfactory.”

109. You say “it will be approved on Monday”?—Yes, Monday was our day.

110. What authority had you for saying that the Board would approve on Monday?—Everything was in order, and there was no reason why we should not approve. We always approved.

111. Did you always approve: you made up your mind it would be approved on Monday?—We always did.

112. That telegram was sent to Sir John Findlay, and he knew the loan would be approved on the Monday?—He was informed so.

113. How often do you meet—every Monday?—Yes, at that time.

114. On the Monday you did not get it approved?—On the Monday the clerk overlooked the thing and I did not get it. After the meeting was over, or the next day, the clerk came in to me and said he had overlooked this big loan and seemed to be very penitent, and I said, “Send it round to the members of the Board,” as was generally done. He then wrote this memo. for my signature, and addressed it to the members of the Board who were present: “At yesterday’s meeting of the Board the attached file was inadvertently omitted to be included with five other files for the Board’s recommendation to the Minister to finally approve, and as the money is urgently needed, or a portion of it, will you be kind enough to each express your approval of this file being submitted for the purpose mentioned, so that when the debentures are received the desired payment of £10,000 can be made without any delay. I personally agree to this being done, which can be confirmed at the next meeting.”

115. Who signed that?—I signed it. It was sent along to the various members, and they agreed.

116. You could not afford to wait till next Monday?—We could have waited.

117. It was marked “urgent”?—Yes.

118. Is it usual for you to do your business on the round-robin principle?—We have done it, and it has been done in other Departments.

119. Do you think it is satisfactory?—It has been done in the Government Insurance Department and the Public Trust Office. Where a lease is required to be signed or something urgent has been overlooked it has been sent round.

120. Even though you may call a meeting?—Yes.

121. Then that round-robin was signed by every member?—Yes, signed by the members of the Board.

122. And submitted to the Minister?—I suppose it was submitted—it must have been submitted. The approval was sent to the Minister. Mr. Carroll signed it for the Minister of Finance on the 7th November, 1911.

123. Then that loan of £42,090 was finally approved on the 7th November, 1911?—Yes. The date must have been filled in by the clerk in anticipation of the Board.

124. Was there another final approval for a Remuera loan on the 4th December, 1911?—I could not say.

125. Will you look up the file dealing with the £37,045 loan?—Yes, 4th December, 1911.

126. Whom is that signed by?—Mr. Carroll’s initials.

127. I ask you again whether you think it satisfactory to take initials?—On the approval it is all that is necessary. I do not think it is necessary to have initials if the Minister approves of it by some mark or writing.

128. The only record you have got is Mr. Carroll’s initials?—That is all.

129. What was the total amount granted to the Remuera Road Board finally approved?—£87,635.

130. Of which £42,900 was finally approved on the 7th November, 1911, and £37,045 on the 4th December?—Yes.

131. And what time did the election take place?—The first ballot was on the 7th December, 1911.

132. Then with regard to amounts that have been granted to boroughs, was £29,280 finally approved for the Birkenhead Borough?—Yes.