

93. *Mr. Weston.*] Prior to 1906 you have not got the revenue and expenditure in connection with the Foxton Wharf?—I have not got the expenditure accurately. What I said was that the figures I have are approximate prior to 1908.

94. Can you tell me roughly whether from 1880 to 1900 there was an annual profit on the working of this wharf?—No, I cannot, because I have not got the expenditure.

95. In regard to the sectional return for the Palmerston-Foxton line, have you any idea how the traffic compares with the return for the whole—can you say if it would give a better return than 4·7 that you credit to the New Plymouth-Wellington Section?—As you cannot separate the capital cost of the Palmerston-Foxton Railway from the total cost of the Foxton-Waitara Railway, it is impossible for me at this juncture to say what the result is.

96. You told us it cost £80,000?—No, I did not. I told you the cost estimated at that time, which is a totally different thing. It may have cost £150,000.

97. Taking it at £150,000, would you say the return from the Foxton-Palmerston North Section would give 6 per cent.?—At the present time I say it would return you a loss. I can tell the Commission this, that when the question of handing over the Foxton Wharf to the original Harbour Board in 1877 was brought up the matter was gone into, and it was definitely pointed out to the Government by Mr. J. P. Maxwell that the net revenue from the wharf represented half the net revenue from the railway—that the railway would be £600 a year to the bad. It was not paying at that time, and it would have had a detrimental effect to the extent of £600 a year at that time.

98. But that the revenue from the wharf made that up?—The net revenue from the wharf was then £600 a year.

99. *Mr. Myers.*] Is it correct to say that ever since the Foxton Wharf was first built it has been operated as an integral part of the railway system?—Yes, that is absolutely correct.

100. Can you give some idea to the Commission of the proportion that the net revenue of the Foxton Wharf bears to the net revenue of your railway, including the wharf, from Foxton to Palmerston?—It is approximately 40 per cent. of the net revenue.

101. I said, as between Foxton and Palmerston. Is that correct, or is it as between Foxton and Longburn?—Foxton and Palmerston, after eliminating working-expenses.

102. That is without taking into consideration the interest on capital expended?—Yes.

103. *The Chairman.*] That means that the line from here to Palmerston earns 60 per cent. and the wharf earns 40 per cent.?—Yes, that is the net revenue. Of course, I am speaking from memory.

104. *Mr. Myers.*] You say that special rates in Foxton have been abolished?—Yes, since the Government purchased the Manawatu Railway line.

105. You have already said that you cannot give the accurate figures prior to 1908, but can you tell the Commission whether since 1908 the aggregate wharfages have increased or decreased?—The wharfages have increased by £1,500 per annum since 1908, although prior to that, while we were competing with the Manawatu line, we made special rates for certain traffic to Foxton.

106. So that while you were competing with the Manawatu Railway and making specially reduced rates, the wharfages were considerably less than they have been since?—That is so.

107. *The Chairman.*] How do you manage the Patea Railway Wharf: is it similar to this?—It is run the same way as Foxton.

108. And the same rates?—No, the rates are different. The wharfage rates are fixed by the Harbour Board.

109. Who gets the wharfage rates?—The Harbour Board.

110. Do they pay you for doing the work?—Anything we do, such as handling, hauling, &c., we charge for to the Harbour Board or to the owner of the goods under our tariff rates. It is 1s. 6d. per ton hauling and handling, and 9d. per ton to Harbour Board, for local goods.

111. Who constructed the wharf there?—I believe it was built by the Provincial Government—I am not quite sure.

112. Then, as to the Wellington Railway Wharf, that was built in 1878?—Yes.

113. That really now belongs to the Wellington Harbour Board?—Yes.

114. You do not charge any wharfage on that?—No.

115. Did you get any money for the wharf?—When we have taken reclaimed land which has been previously the Harbour Board's we have to pay in the amount they have spent on reclaiming. I think that wharf was given in part-payment of that. I will look that up, as I am not quite sure.

116. What about the Onehunga Wharf?—The Onehunga Wharf was for many years run by the Railway Department at a loss, and after completion of the Main Trunk line we were very glad to get rid of it. The Harbour Board desired to take it over on terms, and we had no objection. We got some offer, but I could not tell you what. I will look that up.

117. And in regard to Nelson, I understand you offered to sell the wharf to the Nelson Harbour Board?—No, we did not want to sell: they wanted to buy. It was the same offer as the Foxton Harbour Board had got from the Government. The offer was to sell the wharf on the net earnings capitalized at 3½ per cent.

118. Then you did not offer to sell on any question as to cost: if there was any goodwill it was to be included?—Yes, as a going business concern. It is not a question of cost at all.

119. Supposing there was no wharf at Foxton at all, have you had any valuation as to what it would cost to erect at the present time?—No, we have not. We simply made the offer. We did not want to sell.

120. You wish to treat it simply as a going concern and to be sold as that without dealing with the question of the cost at all?—That is right.

121. *Mr. Williams.*] Could you get an estimate of the wharf as a structure?—I dare say I could get our Engineer to estimate the cost.