

35. Do you consider you have an intimate knowledge of the river?—No, I should hesitate to say my knowledge was intimate.

36. What have you done in connection with the river, and how many times have you been on it?—I have seen the whole of it from Woodville down to the sea.

37. When?—I saw it first in 1876, and I saw it last a little more than a year ago.

38. And between 1876 and a year ago how often have you seen it except from the railway-train?—I have had to report a number of times upon drainage and flood questions in connection with the river.

39. That would be above Foxton?—Yes; but in addition to that I had to go carefully over the work on a previous Commission which sat to consider the possibility of making a fresh channel for the river—straightening and conserving it. I had to go carefully over the work of that Commission, and one of the members of that Commission was one of my colleagues, so we had to go very carefully to be in a position to know what was done.

40. That was purely in connection with drainage questions—drainage of swamps?—No, in connection with floods—to allow the floods to go into the sea.

41. You were not looking at it for the purpose of navigation?—I did at that time look at it for that purpose, because I went down the harbour and spent some little time there in order to grasp the position.

42. Can you say how far up the ships used to go on the Manawatu River in the old days before the denudation of the forest?—I do not know exactly, but I suppose they used to go a long way up.

43. What is the condition above Foxton now?—I doubt if you could get effective navigation much beyond Foxton now. I should say it was too shallow at several places above Foxton for navigation.

44. Would you be surprised to know that above Foxton it is sometimes difficult now to work punts with flax in and motor-launches?—No, there are extremely awkward bends, and that is likely to be the case.

45. So that there has been a great deal of deterioration in the river above Foxton since you knew it?—I have no doubt there has been a silting-up of the channel of the river generally.

46. Have you gone down the river below Foxton to the Heads taking soundings?—No.

47. Do you know the extent and situation of the sandbanks from Foxton to the Heads?—Two were pointed out to me.

48. Do you know their extent?—It was said they were flats of considerable extent.

49. Were they flats that would impede navigation?—Yes, I was told so.

50. Who told you so?—Somebody in connection with the harbour.

51. Was it the Harbourmaster?—No, I do not know who it was.

52. Did you make a special trip up the river before you came to give evidence here, or did you just come here after being hauled up in the street?—I cannot tell you why I was called.

53. Did you ever make any special preparation for the giving of evidence here?—None whatever.

54. I suppose you have never been over the bar in your life?—No; as a matter of fact I have not.

55. *Mr. Myers.*] I suppose you were asked what you knew about the Manawatu River?—I was asked if I knew the river, and I said that people who lived there supposed I knew it, and I dare say that is better than saying I know it myself.

56. And the fact that you knew the river and had sat on this previous Commission were known to the Government officers?—Known to everybody. Whenever a difficulty arises they generally ask me to go up and see about it.

#### EDWARD JOHN HARVEY sworn and examined. (No. 42.)

1. *Mr. Weston.*] You are captain of the "Queen of the South"?—Yes.

2. How long have you been trading to Foxton?—Since 1871, off and on.

3. How long have you been captain of the "Queen of the South"?—Since 1889. I was two or three years in the "Himitangi."

4. And during the whole of that time you have been continuously trading to Foxton?—Yes.

5. What was the condition of the river when you first knew it—how far up could you get?—At the time they were building the Manawatu Bridge we used to go right up to Shannon in a boat called the "Hauraki" with railway-iron.

6. Would that be at spring tides?—Yes, spring tides.

7. Could you get up there now?—I do not know, but I know that launches drawing 3 ft. cannot get up there.

8. *The Chairman.*] Were you ever up where the Railway Bridge is now?—Not the Railway Bridge, no.

9. Do you know whether there is more shingle in the Manawatu River now than there was in the early days?—Yes. When they were building the Manawatu Bridge they had a wharf at Shannon. I was up there at the time of the big eruption.

10. *Mr. Weston.*] How many miles would that be above the Foxton Wharf?—Sixteen miles above, by the river.

11. How does the condition of the channel between the Foxton Wharf and the bar compare with what it was when you first knew it?—We never used to have any trouble in the river—it was always on the bar. The bar is just about the same, off and on—sometimes good and sometimes bad. It is always changeable. In spring tides it was invariably better than it is now, but during the last twelve months it has been very bad.