

200. In regard to the dead-end or terminal siding, have the requisitions or applications from the Manawatu County Council, or people in the district, ever included a request for a dead-end or terminal siding?—No, they have never requested that.

201. What have they requested?—A junction with the main line; and they have advanced the reason of the great facilities that would be offered of getting traffic up to the Main Trunk line.

202. Is a dead-end or terminal siding regarded as a connection? Supposing you had a dead-end or terminal siding running to a station which is part of a main line, would that terminal siding or dead-end be spoken of or regarded as a connection with the main line?—No, the Department would never consider it in that connection.

203. *The Chairman.*] What would you call it?—A tram-line or railway-siding joining. We would regard it as quite a separate thing, and not a connection at all.

204. *Mr. Myers.*] At all events, it has never been asked for?—No.

205. Supposing there were such a terminal siding or dead-end, would it be feasible to transfer your coal from the truck on one line to the truck on the other?—Not without a very heavy expenditure. Speaking of coal as coal, it would not be feasible.

206. When you speak of the feasibility of the suggestion you have regard to the expense?—Yes.

207. Would it be feasible to transfer timber?—Not without a very heavy expense—an expense that would be at least 6d. per 100 ft.

208. Would it be feasible to transfer sheep?—No. It would all depend upon how much expenditure you were willing to incur. If people went to heavy expense for appliances and labour, well, it could be done, but from a practical point of view it would not be feasible.

209. *The Chairman.*] There is also the element of time?—There is, in train-connections.

210. *Mr. Myers.*] Mr. Skerrett suggested to you in regard to the proposed line that according to Mr. Hiley's report there was reason to anticipate a considerable increase, possibly to the extent of doubling the traffic on the Main Trunk line?—Yes.

211. Even if that were so, do you say that this new line would be necessary, or could the traffic be worked with sufficient ease on the present line?—The traffic can be quite satisfactorily worked on the present line, assuming it does double itself, provided the facilities asked for in Mr. Hiley's report are granted.

212. We are told that in 1879 there was a line authorized between Greatford and Bull's?—Yes. That line was included in the schedule, but the Commissioners considered it, and it was referred to a Royal Commission in 1880 (Parliamentary Paper E.—3, 1880). It was from Greatford to Bull's. The report said, "Greatford to Bull's: This is a short branch of four miles in length. It would be expensive to work, and it appears to us that the district is already fairly supplied with railway communication. Bull's to Sandon: Sandon is within eight or nine miles of Greatford Station on the one side, and it is about the same distance from Feilding Station on the other. The proposal is one which we cannot recommend." I have not the names of the Commissioners.

213. *The Chairman.*] Is that the same Commission that dealt with the Wellington-Manawatu line?—Yes.

214. I think Sir William Russell was Chairman?—I do not know.

215. *Mr. Myers.*] We have heard it suggested by some witnesses in the country that motor-wagons could not be used to transport chaff from the Sandon district to Greatford or Feilding, because they have to keep on the metalled roads. Now, can you give the Commission any circumstances which show that that view is incorrect?—Well, in the South Island there is very active competition in the country districts around Waimate. There the motor-lorries go right to the homesteads, load up with full loads, go into Timaru, and get a load back. That is forty miles in some cases.

216. Do you mean that they have merely the metalled roads right up to the homesteads?—Yes. There is the same thing at Hakataramea Valley, and they cart grain many miles to the stations, and they bring grain and wool from Wanaka to Wallace.

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ERNEST HAVILAND HILEY sworn and examined. (No. 50.)

1. *Mr. Myers.*] You are the General Manager of the New Zealand Government Railways?—I am.

2. You have been General Manager since when?—For two years and a half.

3. I want you to give to the Commission any information you can as to the intermediate services, if I may so call them, performed by your Department at Foxton, and as to the necessity or otherwise for specially charging for these intermediate services if you did not receive what you now receive as wharfages?—The point has been raised as to what the effect would be on the Department's revenue if the wharfage was lost, and I should like to make it clear that we are performing a service now which is an intermediate service—a link between wharf and railway—for which we are entitled to charge apart from wharfage. In putting empty wagons on to the wharf, stowing merchandise into the wagons, sheeting, shunting, and the haulage of the wagon to the shed, the Department is performing a service entirely independent of the services which should be performed by them as owners of the wharf. I was docks-manager in England, and there the docks were owned by the railway companies. The accounts of the docks company had to be kept separate from the railway accounts, and the line of demarcation was very clear as between the responsibility of the dock-owning company and the railway company. The dock company received the full wharfage, and performed merely the services