

(No. 68.)

1874.

TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

HUON BRIDGE BILL.

REPORT FROM SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE.

Brought up by Mr. Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed, 18 August, 1874.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed on the Huon Bridge Bill, and the Counter Petitions of Mr. James Lucas, and Messrs. Wise and Shinner.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. MINISTER OF LANDS. MR. RIDDOCH. MR., MITCHELL. MR. VOUNC.	MR. BALFE. MR. LEWIS. MR. JACKSON. (Mover.)
MR. YOUNG.	

DAYS OF MEETING.

14th, 15th, 17th, and 18th August, 1874.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

James Lucas. William Thorp. Thomas Walton. Hubert Beard Evans. Edward Henry Ivey. Joseph Wilson. Edward Atkyns Walpole. Joseph Wise. James Short.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

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Edward Henry Ivey Edward Atkyns Walpole .. William Thorp Thomas Walton Joseph Wilson..... Joseph Wise..... James Short..... s. d.

REPORT.

YOUR Committee have taken under their anxious consideration the questions submitted to them by your Honorable House in reference to the Huon Bridge Bill, and the Counter Petitions of Mr. James Lucas and Messrs. Wise and Skinner, and have examined the most experienced and reliable witnesses, whose evidence they have attached to this Report; and they have come to the following conclusions; viz.—

1. That in considering the claims submitted, and the various interests involved in the question of the erection of a Bridge without an arrangement being made for the passage of vessels, your Committee is unanimously of the opinion that it is undesirable that the navigation of the Huon River should be impeded or closed at this point; and, in order to obviate that difficulty, would recommend that in the erection of any Bridge provision should be made for the free passage of vessels by means of a Draw or Swing Bridge.

2. Your Committee would also recommend that any Bill which may be introduced for the purpose of authorising the erection of such Bridge should include a Clause rendering it compulsory upon those using the said Draw or Swing Bridge to open and close the same at their own expense, and subjecting them to liability for negligence.

Committee Room, 18th August, 1874.

WM. MOORE, Chairman.

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS.

No. 1,

TUESDAY, 11 AUGUST, 1874.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Riddoch, Mr. Young, Mr. Jackson.

1. Resolved, That Mr. Minister of Lands be Chairman.

2. Ordered, That the following persons be summoned to give evidence as to locality and cost of traffic :--James Lucas and E. A. Walpole. To give evidence as to the difficulties of navigation and difference in cost of freight :---James Short, Richard Cuthbert, and William Thorp.

The Committee adjourned at 12.20 to Friday next at 10 A.M.

Witnesses subsequently summoned :- Edward Henry Ivey and Joseph Wilson.

No. 2.

FRIDAY, 14 AUGUST, 1874.

The Committee met at 10.30 A.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands (Chairman), Mr. Young, Mr. Balfe, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Riddoch, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Lewis.

R. P. Adams, Esq., Solicitor-General, appeared as Counsel, and examined witnesses on behalf of James Lucas. James Lucas and William Thorp examined.

The Committee adjourned at 1.52 P.M. to Saturday at 10 A.M.

No. 3.

SATURDAY, 15 AUGUST, 1874.

The Committee met at 10 A.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands (Chairman), Mr. Jackson, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Young, and Mr. Balfe.

R. P. Adams, Esq., attended and examined witnesses on behalf of Mr. Lucas.

Edward Henry Ivey, Joseph Wilson, Thomas Walton, and Hubert Beard Evans examined.

Committee adjourned at 1:30 P.N. to 10 A.M. on Monday.

No. 4.

MONDAY, 17 AUGUST, 1874.

The Committee met at 10 A.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands (Chairman), Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Balle, Mr. Young, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Riddoch.

Henry Dobson, Esq., Solicitor, appeared as Counsel on behalf of Messrs. Wise and Skinner. Edward Atkyns Walpole examined.

Committee adjourned at 11.35 A.M. to 2 o'clock.

The Committee met at 2 P.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands (Chairman), Mr. Young, Mr. Balfe, Mr. Riddoch, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Mitchell, and Mr. Lewis.

Joseph Wise and James Short examined.

Committee adjourned at 4.20 P.M. to 10 on Tuesday.

No. 5.

TUESDAY, 18 AUGUST, 1874.

The Committee met at 10.55 A.M.

Present-Mr. Minister of Lands (Chairman), Mr. Riddoch, Mr. Young, Mr. Balfe, and Mr. Mitchell. Draft Report drawn up and confirmed.

Resolved, That the Chairman do report the result of their deliberations to the House.

The Committee adjourned sine die.

EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 1874.

MR. JAMES LUCAS examined.

By Counsel.—Your name is James Lucas? Yes.

You are a millowner residing near Victoria? Yes.

What quantity of land have you? About 900 acres.

That is situated on the north bank of the Mountain River? Yes.

How far is your land from your jetty in the Township of Victoria on the Huon River? About $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

Is it your own jetty? Yes.

Where is it? At Mosquito Point.

By Mr. Young.--Is that where you ship your timber? Yes.

By Counsel.--Through whose property does your tramway run? Through government land.

Is there a tramway connecting your land and the jetty? Yes.

Is your land well timbered? A great deal of it is.

What description of timber? Blue gum, swamp gum, and stringy bark. There is not much blue gum.

How long have you resided on your property? 23 years.

Did you build a saw-mill? Yes.

When? About 13 years ago.

Is the mill worked by water? Yes.

What is the size of your wheel? 40 feet diameter, 4 feet wide, showering 1 foot deep.

Is the mill worked at a small expense? Yes.

What quantity of timber can you cut a week? We are now cutting 20,000 feet. We could cut 30,000, and have often done so.

Why do you cut only 20,000 now? Because we cannot get the timber in as it is getting further away now. It is not the best season now as the days are so short, and we only work during daylight.

How many persons do you employ in your business? 15 hands.

How do you account for the 80 persons mentioned in your petition? There are 80 persons living on my property, but only 15 employed in the mill.

How do you bring the timber to market? I take it down on my tramway to the jetty where the barges take it on board.

How many barges are employed? Two,

How long have you employed two? Four months. The *Alabama* used to take all my timber, but now two smaller vessels take it.

What quantity does each barge take? 16,000 feet.

What did the *Alabama* take? She has taken 30,000, but about 28,000 was her usual freight. If the timber is large she does not take so much.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? Yes.

How much lower down than your jetty is it? 2 miles.

Have you seen a plan of the bridge? Yes.

If the barges could not get up to the jetty, and you had to load them below the bridge, would it cause you expense? Yes; because the loading could not be done unless the timber was taken down in punts, or a new tramroad was built to carry it down.

Why could it not be done without punts? Because the barges could not pass under the bridge as their masts are too high.

What is the height of the masts? The *Alabama's* lower foremast was 66 feet high, and the topmast **30** feet: I cannot give the height of the smaller barges' masts, but they all carry topmasts.

How would the expense of loading be increased? It would be by the increased labour, as one punt could not take the timber down from the jetty to the bridge as fast as I could cut it.

Have you any punts? No: several punts and plenty of hands could do the work, but at a great cost to me.

Would you have to get punts and employ extra hands at an increased cost? Yes.

Can you estimate the difference between the present cost and that if you had to punt the timber down? No, I could not. The heavy timber could not be taken by punts without great difficulty as they could not discharge below the bridge, though they might be able to load from my jetty. What is the size of the heavy timber? 12×6 , 8×8 , 6×6 , and 12 to 20 feet long.

What market is it for? It is consigned to Mr. Evans in Hobart Town, he takes most of my timber. Where would the new tramroad have to be made? It would have to run through my land, crown land, and Thiomas Walton's.

Do you know that you could get it through Walton's? No.

What length of tramroad would have to be made? About 2 miles additional.

What sort of tramroad would be necessary? All new, as no part of the old and new would join. What would be the cost per mile? ± 120 . A bridge over the Mountain River would have to be made also.

What is the size of the present one? It is 310 feet long.

What would be the cost? I cannot say.

What length would the new tramroad have to be? About 4 or 5 miles.

What are your gross receipts now? £2600 a year, so far as I can tell.

What is the net amount? About £1400 or £1500 pays all expenses.

Does this represent previous years? No; timber is 50 per cent. dearer now, and the market is rising. What is the increased expense of production? Wages are higher, but still the above is my profit.

Do you produce any ledger or books? No.

Do you send all your timber to Mr. Evans? Nearly all.

How much? About 28,000 per week. Mr. Clark in Collins-street has some, but Mr. Evans the bulk.

Does Mr. Evans get exactly 28,000 per week? I can't say. I made a mistake in saying 28,000, I meant 18,000.

By the Chairman.—How long has your mill been in work? 13 years.

Do you know the proposed site of the Huon Bridge? Yes; before I built my mill the bridge was talked of.

Was there any road to the Huon River then? No, only a bridle track, and no road from the Franklin, but a punt worked across the river.

You have 900 acres of land? Yes. I have been cutting on my son's land, and also on my neighbours. I have been cutting on my own land 7 or 8 years.

How long would the timber on your land last? I can't say. My land, together with my two sons', runs nearly three miles up Baker's Creek.

What is the average quantity of timber cut by you per week since you built the mill? 12,000 to 15,000 feet. At first we cut 25,000 or 26,000.

Have you any idea of your annual shipments? No.

Can you tell the quantity of timber taken away by barges from your mill? Not here, I could if I was at home.

What is the cost of transit of timber from the mill to the jetty? 6d. per 100 feet.

What would be the cost if you had a new tramway down to the proposed bridge? 2d. or 3d. per 100 feet.

What is the present cost of freight from the jetty to town? One shilling and three-pence per 100 feet.

If the timber was loaded from below the bridge what would be the cost? I don't know.

Would it cost as much as from your jetty? I would take it for less if I were a barge owner. It ought not to cost so much.

Are the barges long in getting up to the jetty? Yes; in the winter time especially.

How do they get up? They warp up.

Are they ever delayed between the site of the bridge and your jetty? Yes, I have known them delayed a week, even lower down than the site of the bridge. The delay in getting up makes no difference in the cost to me.

Are the barges delayed in consequence of the difficulties of navigation between the proposed site of the bridge and the place where they bring up between the bridge and your jetty? Yes. get up to Short's jetty when they can't get up to mine. Vessels sometimes

What would be the cost of punting timber from your jetty to the bridge? I don't know; I have never punted any. The discharging from a punt into the barge or on to a jetty would be the chief difficulty.

What would punting cost, including the discharging? I don't know.

If you used punts instead of barges could you not load more regularly than at present? No, because if a barge could not get up the river a punt could not.

Did the Alabama carry 28,000 feet? Yes, sometimes 30,000.

How long was she between the trips? She was away generally about ten days, but in summer she got up sooner with the sea breeze.

What is the value of your tramway? It is of no value to any one but myself.

How long would it last? 100 years, as we are constantly mending it.

What would be the cost of building a new tramway? £120 per mile.

What length would be required ? $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

What would be the cost of a tramway from your mill to the Huon Road and thence to the bridge? I don't know exactly, but the distance would be more than a mile further than the present one.

Would the amount, $\pounds 120$ per mile, include the cost of a bridge over the Mountain River? No; the bridge alone would cost $\pounds 150$, as the river is more than a chain wide.

Could the heavy timber be punted down? No.

Have you cut much heavy timber lately? Yes, a great deal; some as large as 9×14 .

Your profit is £1100 from a gross receipt of £2600? Yes, I think so.

The timber is 50 per cent. dearer now? Yes; before the rise in value I made scarcely any profit, but only paid my expenses.

What machinery have you? Vertical frame and circular; we cannot drive one without the other.

What kind of wheel have you? Iron shaft and flange, wooden arms and shrouding, cogs round the rim of the wheel.

By Mr. Young.—Is much timber carried away from your jetty by the floods? Sometimes a little is; I may have lost 2000 feet this year.

How does the loss happen? Sometimes the barges leave some timber on the jetty as they cannot take it all.

What would be the cost of punting? I never calculated on having to punt, and so I don't know the cost.

How often do the barges come to your jetty? From once a week to once in eight or nine days.

Can you estimate how long the timber on your 900 acres will last? No; I remove timber from other people's land for them.

Your mill has been erected 13 years, and you have been cutting all the time? Yes; but Parsons, Bell, Newman, and others have land round mine on which I cut timber.

By Mr. Balfe.-Do you pay 1s. 3d. freight? Yes.

Would you pay less if timber were shipped below the bridge? No; they charge Oates, who ships below, just the same as they charge me.

Has any one offered to take it at the same or a lower rate? No, not to me.

Have you made any estimate of difference of cost if you punt the timber down? No; I don't think it could be punted down.

Have you been a Road Trustee in the Huon District? Yes, I am now.

What was the cost of the bridge over the Mountain River? Either £100 or £120, I don't know which.

Is that bridge strong enough to bear the traffic of the tramway? Yes.

If the barges could lower their masts would the bridge be any obstruction to navigation? The barges could not do it if they had to go out to sea afterwards.

Did you mean that your annual income is £2600 and profit £1100? Yes.

Have you any estimate of an equivalent of the loss you will sustain? No; all I want is a drawbridge.

By Mr. Jackson.-You have 900 acres of your own? Yes.

If the adjoining landowners let you have their timber how long would the timber on your land last? 20 years.

Is there any tramroad on Oates' ground? Yes, to the macadamised road, but none further. It is about four miles in length.

What is the expense of keeping the tramway in working order? £4 per annum per mile.

By Mr. Young.—Did you want a drawbridge to enable the barges to get up to your jetty? Yes, I should make no claim if there was a drawbridge.

If an offer was made to take the timber from your jetty on a seven years' contract, at the present rate, would not that be as good as a drawbridge? Yes, but I would not allow the timber to be punted down, as the men sometimes throw the wood overboard.

By the Chairman.-Do you have bills of lading or contracts signed by the barge owners? No.

Do you ever insure? No; I have always understood that the Companies would not take the risk.

By Mr. Mitchell.-Is there scope for more mills above the bridge? Yes.

Do you think it is likely that more mills will be erected? Yes, one more; Linnell intended to put one up before he was drowned.

Do you know of any other persons interested in the non-erection of the bridge? Yes, the farmers would have to bring their produce further, but they would not be injured to the same extent as myself.

Can you form no estimate of the difference in cost to you if the bridge were erected without a drawbridge? It would involve the expense of an extra man with a horse and cart, which would be about \pounds 120 per annum.

What lump sum would compensate you? About £1000.

By Mr. Lewis.—Would you be satisfied with a sum sufficient to cover the expense of a new tramroad down to the bridge? No, it would not be enough, as I should have to keep the extra man and horse.

What would be about the cost of a new tramroad from your mill to the main road and thence to the bridge? About $\pounds 120$ per mile. It would be about four miles long, that is two miles longer than the present one.

That is assuming you can get it through private land free of cost? Yes; I should have to pay some compensation, but it would not be much.

What is the present distance? $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Two teams go twice a day.

By Mr. Balfe.—How far through private property would you have to take the tramroad? Rather more than a mile.

Through whose land? Thomas Walton's.

WILLIAM THORP examined.

By the Chairman.-Your name? William Thorp.

Where do you live? At the Franklin.

Your occupation? I keep a public-house.

Are you the owner of a barge? Yes.

Do you know the Huon River at Victoria? Yes, but I have not been up the river above the *Picnic Hotel* often.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? Yes.

Do you know of any difficulties in the navigation between the site of the proposed bridge and Mr. Lucas's jetty? Yes, there are numerous snags which are dangerous during the freshes. Vessels have also to stop until the freshes run down as they cannot get up against them.

Do you know if vessels are often detained between the site of the proposed bridge and Lucas's jetty? Yes, I have known them to be detained 3 or 4 days when even a punt could not get up.

Do you think that punts could navigate the river when the barges could not? Sometimes, but there are days when not even a punt could get up.

What is the present rate of freight from Lucas's jetty to town? I don't know, as I have never taken any timber for Lucas, but I believe that it is 1s. 6d. per 100 feet.

What would be the difference in the cost of freight if the timber was carried from below the site of the proposed bridge? I would take it myself for 3d. less.

What would the cost of punting? It would be worth 3d. per 100 feet.

Would you charge more than at present if you had to punt the timber from Lucas's jetty to a point below the bridge and then load for town? If Lucas would make a contract for 5 or 7 years I would take the timber for 1s. 6d. but not 1s. 3d.

You have never taken any timber for Lucas? No, I have not.

Do you think Mr. Lucas would sustain any damage from the erection of the bridge? No, because there are plenty of crafts to take the timber whether the bridge was there or not, or they would take it from below the bridge for 1s. 3d. One man said he would take it for 1s. on a long contract.

Do you know that Oates's timber was taken for 1s. from a point below the bridge? Yes, for a short time; but then a quarrel took place between him and the bargemen, when the price was raised to 1s. 6d.

If a drawbridge 25 feet wide were erected could the barges go up? Yes, but they would have to wait sometimes as they do now until the fresh had run down.

Do you understand lowering vessels' masts? No, I have never seen it done.

Is it possible to do so? I should not like to do it to my barge. I would rather punt the timber down. Would there be any difference in the cost between taking the timber from below the bridge including punting and taking it direct from Lucas's jetty? If I had a contract I would punt it down and then take it to town for the same price.

By Mr. Jackson.—Would you undertake to provide punts to take the timber down and then load for town for 1s. 3d.? No, I should charge 1s. 6d.

Do you know any one else who would take the timber in that way for less than 1s. 6d.? No.

By Mr. Young.—If the bridge was there and you had to punt would you charge more? I would rather punt than take the barge up.

By Mr. Jackson.—Could you give the cost of a jetty below the bridge on which to land the timber when punted down, and at which to load the barges? No.

Where would you propose to erect a jetty? Just below the bridge, so that the barges could lay quietly under the western bank.

By Mr. Young.-Would the cost of a jetty interfere with the cost of freight? No.

By the Chairman.-How long have you resided at the Franklin? 31 years.

How long has the present Huon Road been laid out? We only had a foot road until the new road was made.

Was the erection of a bridge over the present site proposed before the building of Lucas's mill? Yes, long before.

By Mr. Mitchell. --How do you account for the fact that the bargemen do not at present punt the timber down instead of going up in their barges if it is the best plan? I don't know, I would not punt myself unless I had a contract.

By Counsel.—Are there any persons who would provide punts if you had a contract? No, I would use my own.

By the Chairman.-Have you been long in the carrying trade? 20 years.

By Counsel.—The charge of 1s. 6d. per 100 feet must leave a large profit to the barge owners? That depends on the amount the barges can carry.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 1874.

THOMAS WALTON examined.

By Counsel.-You live at Victoria, and are a Farmer? Yes.

You are acquainted with Mr. James Lucas's mill? Yes.

You helped to put it up? I helped to start it.

What amount of timber will it cut a week ? About twenty thousand feet.

Do you know if the mill has always had full employment? Yes, it has always been going, except now and again.

How far from the mill do you live? Four miles.

Do you know Lucas's tramway? Yes.

What state of repair is it in? Out of repair sometimes, but there is always some man keeping it in order. It is not as good as when first started; it is bad in places.

Have you seen better tramways? Yes.

How many waggons go up and down? Two, twice a day.

What quantity of timber could be carried in each waggon? 800 or 900 feet.

Do you know Lucas's land? Yes.

What is the state of the timber on it? It is a perfect forest of timber.

Can you give any idea how long the timber would last at its present rate of consumption? I could not.

You had a saw-mill once? Yes.

Can't you then give us an idea? No, I cannot; I cut my timber differently to the way Lucas cuts his. I think it would last 15 years.

By the Chairman.-You say Lucas's mill can cut 20,000 feet of timber a week? Yes.

For any number of weeks consecutively? I can't say of my own knowledge, as I don't live on the spot.

You can't give any correct statement of timber produced by Lucas's mill in any given time? No; it would cut about 20,000 feet of timber a week. Two crafts are employed to carry the timber, and 2 tramway cars work twice a day.

How long is it since Lucas's tramway was laid down? Eight years.

Have the sleepers been renewed since? In places; in some places it is as good as ever.

What is the size of the tramrail? 4 by 4.

How many acres does Lucas hold? About 1000.

For how many years has Lucas cut timber on it? For about twelve years.

How many thousand feet of timber per acre would the land average? I don't know; perhaps 100,000. How many acres has Lucas taken the timber off? I can't say; it is thinned in some places.

How do you know it would last 15 years? He has not got over one-half of it yet, and I know how long he has been cutting on the land, but I have never calculated exactly.

Then you give your evidence from appearances? Yes; judging from eyesight.

Would there be any difficulty in getting a tramway from Lucas's mill to the Huon road and thence to the proposed bridge? The chief difficulty would be to cross the Mountain River; the gradients would be fair.

What would be the difference in length between the present trainway and the proposed one? The latter would be $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, and the other 3 miles; so that $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles would be the difference.

Are there any difficulties in the navigation of the Huon River between the proposed bridge and Mr. Lucas's mill? No; only an occasional fresh.

Have you ever known vessels detained between those points? Yes.

Do you know anything about the cost of freight from Lucas's jetty to Hobart Town? I think he pays 1s. 3d. per 100 feet. Do you think it would cost more to punt the timber from Lucas's jetty to the proposed bridge and then to take it to Hobart Town than the present mode costs? The timber could not be punted; the labour would kill any one man. I have never carried timber to Hobart Town from the Huon River myself, but I have punted timber.

Was the site of the proposed bridge surveyed before Lucas built his mill ? No.

By Counsel.-Where did you punt timber ? From Skinner's and from Lucas's jetty for my own use.

From experience you say that the heavy timber could not be punted? It could, but would require reat strength, and it would be a great trouble to load a barge from a punt, as some of the timber is 400 Ibs. weight.

By Mr. Lewis.-Is the river easily navigable above bridge? Yes; it is 14 feet deep in middle, but there are snags on either side.

If the river is easily navigated, what is the difficulty in punting? Handing the timber out of a punt into a barge; it would require tackle and a windlass to get it out. It is worth more than 3d. per 100 to punt timber.

By Mr. Mitchell.—What portion of the trees are fit for sawing? About two-thirds; the rest is rotten and scrubby.

Which tramway would you prefer-the proposed or the present one? The present one, because it is the shorter; you could not go twice a day on the new one.

Is the present tramway equal in value to half the cost of a new tramway? Yes, more than equal to half the cost.

Have you seen it lately? Yes, a few days ago.

By the Chairman.-Do you think timber worth more than 3d. per 100 feet for punting? Yes. Would the difference in the length of the two tramways cost 3d. extra? No.

H. B. EVANS examined.

By Counsel.—Your name is Hubert Beard Evans? Yes.

You are a timber merchant and shipowner? Yes.

You have purchased Lucas's timber for some time past? Yes.

How much have you purchased within the last 12 months? I dare say £3000 worth.

Do you know Lucas's mill? Yes.

What amount of timber could it cut per week? I should think about 20,000 feet.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? Yes.

If the bridge was to be built without a draw-bridge would it be a serious injury to Lucas? Yes.

In what way? By obstructing the navigation of the Huon River for two miles. In the winter he could not get away his timber from his jetty, and punts could not carry the timber during a fresh.

Why so? They would be liable to capsize; the timber would reach across the punt and catch in the snags.

You are acquainted with bridges constructed with a draw-bridge? Yes; I have opened such a bridge at Piermont in New South Wales.

Was that a swing-bridge? Yes. I was engaged in carrying coals from Newcastle to Sydney at the time.

Did all crafts passing through open the bridge and close it after them ? That was the toll-keeper's duty, but I have made my own men do it. I cannot say it was imperative on me to do so; I found no difficulty in doing so.

Was any one specially in charge? The toll-keeper: it was his duty, but he was away sometimes.

Was the bridge for carts, or only foot passengers? Only the latter.

Was the swing-bridge opened often? Yes, many times every day. There was a great trade above the bridge.

You have dealt with Lucas for a long time? Nine years. He sends up 18,000 to 20,000 feet of timber per week regularly.

By the Chairman.-For how long has he been sending the above amount? I have received the above amount for over eight years.

Have you been a master mariner, and are you acquainted with the working of vessels? Yes.

You say punts could not carry the timber from Lucas's jetty to the proposed bridge? Yes; because the timber must be placed across the punt, or else the punts could not be rowed down. One could not pole a punt up the Huon River.

Do you think it possible to navigate the river? It is safe for vessels but not for punts.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? Yes.

Is the river difficult of navigation? Between the bridge and Lucas's jetty I have seen a barge strike against a snag and heel right over.

Is 1s. 3d. the present freight from Lucas's jetty to Hobart Town? Yes.

Since the rise took place in timber has this been the customary price? Yes; the Alabama took it for 1s. for a short time one summer from Lucas's jetty.

Would there be any difference in the cost from Lucas's jetty and from a point below the proposed bridge? Yes, a slight difference.

What difference would there be? I cannot give an opinion—perhaps 3d. less; but it would cost more than 6d. to punt the timber down.

How many men would it take to open a swing bridge 14 ft. 6 in. wide and 25 ft. long? That would all depend on the purchase there was.

What would be the annual cost? Not much, as the craftsmen ought to open and shut it, and it would only be wanted two or three times a week.

Could vessels use the bridge in spite of difficulties of navigation? Yes: as when a fresh was running down they would not be able to use it.

By Mr. Mitchell.—How many men generally work the crafts? Three. The men could leave their craft in safety when made fast, and then open the bridge.

By Mr. Young.—Would the erection of a swing-bridge endanger the bridge? No; it could be erected safely on the Franklin side, where the floods would have no effect upon it.

Is there a large amount of drift-wood in flood time? Yes, I believe so.

By Mr. Lewis.-Do you know the Swing Bridge at Constitution Dock, Hobart Town? Yes.

What opening would be required to let crafts go through easily? About 26 feet.

What width of swing-bridge would admit of a coach and four crossing? About seven feet—nine fee^t would be abundance of room.

Do you think a swing-bridge to cover a 26 feet opening, and 9 feet wide, could be erected there, and easily worked? Yes, but a winch would be necessary. With some mechanical appliances it could be easily worked. This would be the best kind of bridge.

You think that kind of bridge could be made strong enough to let a coach go across? Yes.

By the Chairman.—Do you know anything about lowering vessels' masts? It is not practicable with our barges carrying timber. I never saw a vessel lower her masts.

By Mr. Young.-Are crafts' masts ever 90 feet high? Yes, with the topmast.

E. H. IVEY examined.

By the Chairman.-Your name? Edward Henry Ivey.

Your occupation? I am a farmer.

Your present place of residence? On the bank of the Huon River, on the Franklin side, about a mile above the Huon Road.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? Yes.

Do you know Lucas's jetty? Yes.

What is the distance between the site of the proposed bridge and Lucas's jetty? About l_4^1 mile.

Do you know anything about the navigation of the river? Yes: it is difficult to get up against the fresh. I have known the *Alabama* having to lay five or six days near the site of the proposed bridge, and could not get up against the fresh.

Do you know anything about the cost of freight to Hobart Town from Lucas's jetty? Only from hearsay, about timber.

Do you know the price of timber of your own knowledge? No, I do not.

Do you think that if the bridge were put up as proposed, without a draw-bridge, it would cause damage to Lucas? No, I do not.

Have you been at Lucas's mill? Yes.

Do you know the length of his tramway? I believe it is over two miles.

Have you walked on it? / Yes. It is not in good repair.

Do you know the country between Lucas's mill and the Huon Road? Yes.

Do you think a good tramway could be made there? Yes; the chief difficulty would be in crossing the Mountain River.

What would be the increased length? About one-fourth; that is, about three quarters of a mile.

By Mr. Young.—Do you know the Huon River well in all seasons? Yes; I have lived on the bank of the river for the last six years.

Is there a large quantity of drift-wood in the winter? Yes, some very heavy logs.

In your opinion if a drawbridge, 30 feet wide, were put across the river, would it damage the bridge? I think it would weaken it. The timber which comes down is large; sometimes trees 90 feet long, branches and all, are carried down.

You opinion is that timber would collect in a 30 feet opening? Yes.

By Mr. Mitchell.—Are people below bridge against a drawbridge? No; rather in favour, as opposed to compensation.

By Mr. Lewis.—It drawbridge was erected on the Franklin side, could not some guard be made above? Yes, that would be necessary; a guard of piles would protect it. When the drift-wood comes down no vessel could get up, not even a boat.

How far above the proposed bridge is the river navigable? Lucas's Jetty is the highest point to which barges go.

If timber blocked up the drawbridge opening, would there be much trouble to get it clear, even at slack water? Yes; on the Franklin side the drawbridge would be protected by a shallow just above, which throws the current to the other side.

What depth is the river? From three to thirteen feet; the middle is clear, but there are snags at each side. A barge drawing six or seven feet could go up the middle at high water.

What is the bottom of the river? Generally pebbles.

If drawbridge made in bridge, would crafts rarely use it? Yes, for they would prefer loading below the bridge, and take timber, if punted down, for a less cost of freight.

By Mr. Lewis.—Do you think it possible to punt heavy timber from Lucas's jetty to the bridge in calm weather, at a moderate expense? Yes, at any time or tide; punts could be built to carry 2000 or 3000 feet at any time or tide.

What would it be worth to punt it down from Lucas' jetty to the bridge? Three-pence per 100 feet. By Counsel.—When did you last go over Lucas's tramway? Six months ago; I went all through it. Does it cost much to keep the tramway in repair? No, not much; that depends upon the traffic.

What line could be made from Lucas's mill to the bridge? A line one-fourth longer than present one. Could you use any part of the old line? Yes, I think so,—about one-half; but that would depend on where the line turned off to join the Huon Road.

Do you know exactly the cost of punting on the river? No; I know the distance and the time taken up, and judge accordingly.

Who would supply punts to Lucas? Any barge-owner would, as they all have punts.

Are punts used to carry large timber? Punts are not generally used for carrying timber. The barges go up to Lucas's jetty and load there; but I think the timber could easily be carried in punts.

By the Chairman — If the bridge were put up, would it increase the value of land on the Franklin side of the river? I am sure it would.

Do you know Skinner's mill? Yes.

How far is it above the site of proposed bridge? About two-thirds of a mile.

What quantity of land has Skinner? About 500 acres originally; I don't know what he has now.

Would the value of Skinner's land be increased by a bridge being built? Yes, all the land on the other side of the river would; only the value of the land, not of the mill.

Would the erection of the bridge entitle Skinner to any special compensation? No; because thirty years ago Sir W. Denison spoke of putting up a bridge, and anyone who erected mills above the site proposed afterwards did so with his eyes open, and is not entitled to any compensation.

Do you know what quantity of timber Skinner's mill could cut? He has a 12 horse-power engine, but I can't say how much it could cut.

Then you can't say how much he has been in the habit of cutting? He did not cut much at first, but has cut more since timber increased in value. Lucas has been in the habit of cutting three times as much as Skinner.

Has Skinner a jetty? Within the last month or six weeks Skinner has erected a jetty.

Do you know any vessels carrying timber from Skinner's mill? Short's barge, the "Catherine," has taken several loads lately, and the "William Henry" a few times.

Are there any difficulties of navigation between the proposed bridge and Skinner's mill? Yes, similar to those higher up the river.

Could timber be carried from below the bridge, including punting, as cheaply as it is at present from Skinner's jetty? It would not increase the cost of freight.

Has Skinner much timber near his mill to cut on his own ground? No; nearly all the timber is worked out on his own ground.

Where does he get his timber? From one or two miles up the river, by bullock teams; sometimes he gets it lower down.

Have you heard that Skinner intended to remove his mill for want of timber? Yes, I know he went down to Surges Bay with Wise to view a place.

By the Chairman.—Would you consider Skinner's mill at present a profitable speculation? Yes, if properly worked.

Have you any idea of the cost of getting timber in? It costs about £1 a day. Each log is worth 6 or 7 shillings. They get 4 logs a day. His timber is mostly taken from Crown land.

Has Skinner any tramway? Yes, one from his mill to the river. He intends laying down one 4 or 5 miles up the road. The present one is 200 yards long.

Can you give any idea of the quantity of timber he ships? No.

Do you consider that Skinner's claim is in connection with his mill? Yes, but the increased value of his land from the erection of the bridge would compensate him.

Is there a road from his mill to the bridge? Yes, but it is a bad one, though it could easily be made good. Produce is sometimes carted down by that road.

Could not all produce be carted by that road? Yes it could, but it is easier to punt it down.

By Counsel.-Do you know the land behind Skinner's mill? Yes. There is no good timber for cutting there.

Have you examined the country yourself? I have been over it several times after my cattle.

Is there good timber up the river within 5 or 6 miles of Skinner's mill? Yes, large beds of good timber.

Had Skinner no jetty before the one recently built? No, he shipped from the bank of the river. He has always shipped without a jetty before.

Will the erection of the bridge increase the value of the land on the other side of the river? Yes, every acre.

When the Huon Road was completed did that increase the value of land in the district? Yes, it did. Do you know that for 5 years after the Huon Road was finished the land at the Huon was never so unsaleable? Yes, but it was so all over the Colony.

What is Skinner's land worth without the timber mill and machinery? About £2 per acre.

If the bridge were put up would it increase the value of the land ? Yes, 10 per cent.

Then you think that £30 cash would compensate Skinner and Wise ? Yes, it is more than enough. You say if there was a drawbridge crafts would not trouble to go through ? No, they would not.

Why then have barges gone up to Lucas's jetty for the last 10 years? Because they traded regularly. What would punting cost from Lucas's jetty to the bridge ? I would do it myself for 3d. Mr. Short

or Thorp would do the same. Do you know that Skinner and Wise applied to the Road Trust for leave to lay down a tramway?

Yes, but they have had no answer, and the matter is still in abeyance. The tramway is to go to the beds of timber before mentioned.

JOSEPH WILSON examined.

By the Chairman.—Your name? Joseph Wilson.

Your occupation ? Craftsman.

Are you an owner? Yes.

Place of residence? Victoria, Huon.

What is your vessel's name? Rebecca.

Her carrying capacity? About 50 tons.

Do you know the site of the proposed bridge? I do.

Have you ever been engaged in carrying timber from Lucas's jetty? I have.

Are there any difficulties of navigation between the bridge and Lucas's jetty? None, except time and floods.

Have you ever been delayed yourself? Yes, sometimes for a week together.

What was the cause of delay? Floods and head wind.

Where do you experience the greatest obstacle? From Ironstone Creek to site of bridge is as bad as from the bridge to Lucas's jetty.

Do you know Short's jetty? Yes.

Could vessels get up to Short's jetty when they could not get up to Lucas's? Yes.

Is Short's jetty above proposed site of bridge? Yes.

Could you make more trips from Short's jetty in a year than from Lucas's? Yes, a few more.

What is the cost of freight from Lucas's jetty? I believe it is 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. I got 1s. 3d. for one load.

Have you not carried more than one load? Yes, I have carried for 20 years past, but I only carried one load for 1s. 3d. I have had as much as 5s. per 100 feet.

Would you carry now at 1s. 3d.? No. I have left it because that is the price to do other work.

If Lucas's timber were taken down to a point below the site of the bridge would you take it for less? For 1d. or so less per 100 feet.

Is it possible to punt it down? I could not punt Lucas's timber, and would not make one to do so. Did you serve your time as a sailor? No.

Were you ever in any ship's articles as an A.B. seaman? No.

You are a she-oaker then? Yes, if you term it so.

Have you ever been on board a vessel whose masts were lowered? No, but have seen them in England. Have you ever seen sea-going vessels do it? No, only canal boats.

Do you think it possible to lower your vessel's masts? No.

Is there much timber floating down the river? Sometimes in a heavy flood. Sometimes trees 50 or 60 feet.

If a bridge were put up with 30 or 40 feet span would the floating timber block up the openings? Yes, I think so.

By the Chairman.—If a drawbridge were erected on the Franklin side could you take crafts through? Yes, if there was a buoy moored so that we could ease the craft down slowly.

Are the difficulties of navigation at the Huon River similar to those at Bridgewater? Yes, but greater, as the river is narrower at the Huon.

Would you anticipate any injury to your vessel? No.

Do you drag your anchors going down the river? I have done so sometimes, but not far.

By Mr. Mitchell.-Did you ever suffer any injury from logs floating down the river? No.

By Counsel.—Do you know Skinner and Wise's mill? Yes, it is three-quarters of a mile above the site of the bridge. I never measured the distance, but know the frontage of all allotments along the river, and so I can tell.

Have you ever carried timber for Skinner and Wise? No; I have loaded there, but not with their timber.

Can they load without a jetty? Yes, they do so now.

Do you know if they ship all their timber at their mill or bring it down to Short's jetty? Sometimes bargemen take up their crafts, but sometimes send up their men for it in punts.

What would you punt timber from Skinner and Wise's mill to the site of the bridge for? 4d. per 100 feet, but I would rather not to do it.

What are the difficulties? The trouble of getting timber out of a punt on to the bank of the river or into a barge.

Do you think any one could get men to punt it for 3*d*. per 100 feet? Whoever says he could knows nothing about the matter.

What sort of timber is Skinner's? Lighter than Lucas's generally, but they do cut heavy stuff sometimes. Their mill is capable of cutting large timber.

What is the size of their engine? 8-horse power.

Is there any one in Victoria who would punt for 4d. per 100 feet? No, I think not.

If a bridge were erected without a drawbridge would Skinner and Wise be at an additional cost to get their timber to Hobart Town? Yes, as they would have to punt it down to the bridge.

Will land on the other side of the river be improved in value by the building of the bridge? I think it will, because at times nothing can get across the river.

Would Skinner and Wise's land be improved in value? No, as it is so far from the bridge.

If it improved it at all, would the increased value compensate them if there was no drawbridge? No. By the Chairman.—Have you a punt? Yes, I have been engaged in punting from the Falls 1½ miles above Lucas's jetty and other places, but would not try to punt Lucas's timber.

Have you seen large timber cut at Skinner and Wise's mill? Yes, some 18 feet long.

What size timber can the mill cut? About 18 feet.

Do you know the size of their engine? Only by hearsay, but I brought it there in my craft; I never calculated the size.

What size cylinder would constitute an 8-horse power engine? An 8-inch cylinder.

Have you any land of your own? One place 66 acres at the Huon, and another elsewhere.

Are you a competent judge of land? Yes.

Would the erection of a bridge increase the value of Skinner and Wise's land? No, it is too far from the bridge.

By Counsel.—Is there any good timber 5 or 6 miles from their mill? Yes, very good beds. It would not run out in their time or their sons' either. There is both sawing and splitting timber within 3 or 4 miles.

What have Skinner and Wise shipped lately? I don't know.

What can their mill cut? About 18,000 feet a week.

What sort of boiler? Egg ended; I don't know the size of it.

By Mr. Young.—If a bridge were placed across the river without a drawbridge would you lose by it? Yes; but I am not trading up the river at present.

If you had no work would you take Lucas's timber for 1s. 3d.? Yes, but I ought to get 1s. 6d.

By Mr. Mitchell.—Would the bridge injure you as a craftsman? It would if I traded up the river. By the Chairman.—Have you any objection to the bridge being built? No; but I would sooner see a bridge built with draw for crafts.

Monday, August 17, 1874.

E. A. WALPOLE, Esq., examined.

By the Chairman.-You are a Stipendiary Magistrate? I am, for the district of Franklin.

How long have you resided there? Upwards of 20 years.

Do you know the site of proposed Huon Bridge? I do.

Do you know Mr. Lucas's jetty? I do.

Are there any difficulties in the way of navigation between the site of the proposed bridge and Lucas's jetty? Great difficulties occasionally.

Have you known vessels detained between the two points? I have, for upwards of a week.

Do you think if a bridge was built without any drawbridge, that any great damage would be caused to Lucas? I don't think so to any great amount.

Have you any means of assessing the damage? It would be the difference between the present cost of traffic by water and the additional cost of traffic by land along the public road.

What would be the cost of punting timber? I don't know; it is done occasionally from other places, but not from Lucas's. The man who takes Lucas's timber stated that he would take it from below the site of the bridge for 1s., and he now gets 1s. 3d.

Who told you so? Richard Cuthbert: but he said he would not punt it for 6d.

What is the length of Lucas's present tramway? About $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Do you know if a practical road could be made from Lucas's mill to the Huon Road, and thence to the bridge? Yes, or it could be made to join Oates' tramway.

Do you know the country through which it would have to run? Yes, it is favourable as to gradients.

What would be the difference in length between the present and proposed tramway? I don't know where it would strike the Huon Road, and so can't tell exactly. It would be about the same distance as at present.

If the proposed tramway were 1 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile longer, what would be the additional cost? He brings two loads now, and he could do so then, so the additional cost would not amount to 3*d*. per 100 feet. With a new line it would not cost more by one tramway than the other, and therefore he would save the 3*d*. over the 1*s*. which the water traffic costs him now.

Would the additional cost of transit by the proposed tramway be equal to difference in freight? No.' How long is it since Lucas's mill was built? I can't say.

Was the Huon Road laid out and bridge projected before his mill was built? Years before; surveys and levels were taken. I took depths of river and selected site of bridge before the road was brought there.

Then the road was laid out and levels and sections taken for the bridge before Lucas's mill was built? Years before.

Was Andrewartha employed by Sir W. Denison to survey the site? I have heard so, but it was before I was living down there. This bridge was laid out 5 years before Lucas's mill was built. The Ministry of the day came down and selected the present site.

Do you think a drawbridge could be erected? I can't say.

Would the current prevent vessels going through the drawbridge? Sometimes they could not go up or come down when a fresh was on.

Have you seen much driftwood in the river? Yes, logs 100 feet long.

If the opening in the bridge was contracted to 40 feet, would driftwood collect and carry away the bridge? Yes, unless the bridge were built in some place where there was still water.

Do you know Skinner and Wise's mill? Yes.

How far is it above the site of bridge? About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Is it a large mill? No, a small affair.

Have you any idea of quantity of work? No, I have heard it is all punted down. Vessels never go up for it.

Have they any claim for a large amount of compensation? No, none at all. The benefit of having the bridge would compensate them.

By Mr. Lewis.—Is their mill smaller than Lucas's. It is nothing to be compared to it; it cannot cut, heavy stuff. There is not employment for one craft to carry their timber.

By the Chairman.-Have you ever known any heavy stuff to be cut ? No.

What does the mill cut? Junk and boards.

Would other parties be entitled to compensation if Skinner's claim allowed? Yes, the farmers would be entitled to an equal amount, because they would have to cart produce down to bridge, instead of shipping it at Mosquito Point, a distance of two miles. There are a number of farmers on the Franklin side above Skinner's mill.

Has Skinner any timber on his freehold? I don't know.

Do you know what facilities they have for getting timber? No.

How long is it since Skinner and Wise's mill was built? Much more recently than Lucas's; about four or five years.

What is the value of their mill? I can't say.

Are there any good buildings in connection with their mill? No; his dwelling-house is only a rough structure.

Have you been inside the mill? No.

Do you know anything about machinery? No.

By Mr. Jackson.-Is all their timber taken by punts? Most of it is; I have never seen a vessel at the mill.

By Mr. Mitchell.—If there was a full load, would a vessel go up? Yes.

Do they habitually go or not? They do go, but not unless there is a full load; but as a rule they punt the timber down. The mill cuts so little timber, and so slowly, that punts can take it all.

By Mr. Lewis.-Do you remember the "Cobre" steamer trading to the Huon? Yes.

Did she ever go up to Mosquito Point? No; the "Culloden" went once, but would not go a second time. She afterwards went to Ironstone Creek Ferry, that is half a mile below site of proposed bridge.

By Counsel.-Do you know what timber the mill produces per week? No, I do not.

How can you say that the produce is so small and so slowly done? I have seen timber punted down, but I can't say of my own knowledge what work is done, only from what I have noticed.

Have you noticed enough to say that the quantity is small? No; it is small compared with other mills.

What is a small quantity,—is it 1000 or 5000 feet per week? 5000 feet per week is small; I don't believe Skinner and Wise produce 3000 feet per week.

Would you be surprised to hear that they do actually produce 10,000 feet per week? Yes, I should be surprised to hear they had ever done so.

If you are told they produce even 8000 feet, do you withdraw your statements? No, I believe what I have stated to be the case.

You say you have never seen a vessel at the mill? I have not.

Do you believe they habitually go? Yes, if there is a full cargo.

How far is their mill from the bank? A very short distance; I can't give it exactly, or how they load their timber.

You say the bridge will cause them no damage? No, I think it will not.

How will they get their timber to market? Cart it down from the mill to below site of bridge, and then ship it.

Would it be easier to cart or punt? To cart it.

What is the cost of carting per 100 feet? I don't know.

What is the cost of punting per 100 feet? I don't know.

You say that bargemen take the timber for 3d. less from below the bridge than above it? Yes.

Do you know that a bargeman says he takes timber from Short's jetty for the same price as from Lucas's jetty? I dare say they would; the bridge would cause no damage, as they could punt just as well when the bridge is built as they can now.

How do you know that nearly all their timber is punted down? By my own eyesight. In fact, I say now that they punt a great quantity. I have seen it done.

Do you say that the cost of freight after the bridge is built will be no more than at present? In my opinion, no more.

Do you know what freight is paid from their jetty? I hear 1s. 3d.

Did Cuthbert ever say he would not punt timber for 6d.? Yes, but only from Lucas's mill.

You say that you understood twenty years ago a bridge was to be built? Yes, I did understand that. You say that eighteen years ago surveys were made and a bridge projected ? Yes.

Is it your opinion that for the last eighteen years the people above bridge have considered the naviga-tion of the river likely to be taken away from them at any moment? Had I lived above bridge I should never have expected the navigation as a right, after the plans and survey were taken, as there is an emphasized on each side of the second s

esplanade on each side of the river.

You say their mill can't cut heavy stuff? I wanted some myself once, and they could not cut it.

What size did you want? Deep beams-I can't give the size.

Who did you order it from? I did not order it, as I was told by a man that it was no use sending as they did not cut heavy timber.

By Mr. Jackson.-Skinner and Wise, in their petition, say that the timber cut at their mill is carried along their tramway to their jetty, and is there shipped on board barges. Is this correct? No, it is not; for they use punts.

They also say that those barges convey the timber direct to Hobart Town, and that sometimes one and sometimes two barges are employed. Is this correct? I don't know.

By Mr. Lewis.—Was a suspension bridge ever projected by the Government? Yes: 18 years ago.

That was the bridge now lying on the New Wharf, Hobart Town? Yes.

Do you know the height at which it was proposed to erect the bridge above high water mark? No, I don't remember.

At that time were the barges employed which now trade there? A steamer used to run then, and all. the produce was brought in punts to Ironstone Creek and there shipped. There was no timber trade or saw-mills there at that time.

JOSEPH WISE examined.

By Counsel.—You are a timber cutter and mill-owner on the Huon River in partnership with John. Skinner? Yes.

What land have you? We own 150 acres fronting on the Huon River, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile above the proposed bridge.

What have you erected on the land? Mill-shed, engine-house, and men's huts.

What engine have you? Horizontal, 8 to 10 horse power, 10-inch cylinder.

How far is your mill from the water's edge? 100 yards.

How is your timber taken down? By a tramway.

Since the rise in timber took place what have you produced at your mill? 10,000 feet per week in the last six months.

Before the rise took place what was your weekly production? Much less, as we were not constantly working; it was not worth while at the existing price, but we averaged 5000 feet per week.

When did you erect your mill? Five years ago.

Have you been cutting 5000 feet a week all the time? No; sometimes we stopped for two months together in the winter.

Can you state that since Christmas you have cut 10,000 feet per week? Yes.

Is your timber taken by crafts to market? Yes.

Is it shipped from your jetty? The greater part is. A small quantity is taken in punts.

Explain how this is? Sometimes Short has nearly a load of produce at his store, and he punts a little timber down, but never more than two punt loads, to fill up his craft and make a full load of general cargo.

If Mr. Walpole stated that most of your timber is punted, is it true? No, it is incorrect.

If Mr. Walpole said he believes you don't cut 3000 feet per week, is that incorrect? Yes, emphatically so. His estimate is three times too little.

Are crafts able to come alongside of the bank of the river, opposite your mill? Yes, but they load off a jetty.

Can they come close up to the bank? They have done so, but it is very inconvenient.

If Mr. Walpole stated that your mill can't cut heavy stuff, is that correct? No.

What size can and have you cut? Timber 12 to 18 feet long, and from 8×6 to 24×6 .

What heavy stuff have you cut? 12 inch boards on a circular board.

Do you call 6×6 heavy? Yes; but I have cut 8, 10, and 12×4 .

Can one man lift a $6 \times 6 \log ?$ No, it would take two men.

Do you cut whatever size you think will pay? No, we cut to order.

Could you cut as large timber as Lucas? Yes.

Do you know what size Lucas can cut? Lucas usually cuts timber 22 feet long. Longer logs than that are "unhandy." We have cut logs 24 feet long.

If the Bridge is made without a draw-bridge, will it be a loss to you? Yes.

Explain? The extra expense of getting the timber below the Bridge would take away all the gain obtained by increased price of timber.

What is the lowest price for which you could get your timber punted? We could not get men to stand the work; they might for a short time, but not for long. We could not get them to do it for 4d. per 100 feet.

Have you punted any timber down the Huon yourself which did not come to Hobart Town? We took two or three loads to Shipwright's Point for Mr. Inches, as Short could not take them for us.

Did you sell Mr. Inches any other timber which you did not take down? Yes, Short took it, as punting it down did not pay us.

Have you, during the last few months, cut small orders for people in the Huon? Yes, a great deal besides what went to Belbin & Dowdell. The purchasers came for it themselves.

You think you could get more timber punted for less than 4d. per 100 feet? No, I could not.

Are there many men to undertake punting? No; there is scarcely any labour available.

In selecting site of your mill, did you select it for the timber on your land, or the adjoining land? For that on the adjoining land and crown land near it. No mill has been built on the Huon without crown land round it to cut timber from. Have you cut timber on private land? Yes.

What did you pay for it? Nothing; they allowed us to cut it.

Is there much timber on the crown land near yours? Yes, enough to last more than my lifetime, both for sawing and splitting.

If some of this best-timbered land was bought up at once, would you be able to get timber easily? Yes; we have been offered the timber round there. No land has been taken up lately where the timber is; it never could be taken. It is not fit for other purposes, as it is not worth the upset price.

Are you certain that for many years you could get timber for nothing within three or four miles of your mill? Yes, I am certain if things remain as they are now.

What is the licence fee? 2s. 6d. per week per man. We can employ as many men as we like at that price to cut timber on the crown land, but owners of land give us their timber for nothing.

What is the present price of timber? 7s. 6d. per 100 feet in Hobart Town.

What was the price when you put up your mill? 6s. when we started.

Did you think that that price could pay you to put a tramway back into the crown land? Yes. but the price fell directly afterwards, and we could not do so.

Have you made any attempt to put up a tramway since rise in price took place? Yes, we wrote to Mr. Moore, but the matter is still in abeyance. Timber was 5s. per 100 twelve months ago, but we have sold it for 4s. 9d.; we sold flitches to Mr. Inches for 5s. 9d., reckoning 1s. for punting:

Mr. Walpole told us you could more easily cart timber than punt it? Neither is very practicable; the road would want remaking the whole distance.

If the Road Trust made a road what would be the cost of carting? It could not be done cheaper than punting, but I scarcely know: it would take two horses and a man, and it would kill the day to go twice.

Would that cost $\pounds 100$? It could not be done for that sum, punting would cost $\pounds 120$; to tram it down would cost 3d. per 100 feet, the handling costs the money.

What compensation do you claim? £400 was the sum we thought of.

What have been your gross receipts since Christmas? £30 per week clear of freight; 6s. per 100 clear of freight.

What are your expenses of working? £14 a week.

Does that include wear and tear of mill? No, that would bring it up to £16 per week. The amount Mr. Walpole believes us to cut would not pay our hay bill, which is £6 or £7 per week, £15 a fortnight; the amount varies according to the price of hay.

Did you visit any other places in the Huon District with a view of changing the locality of your mill? Yes, but we have no idea of doing so now.

What was your object in looking about? To find a place where there was timber nearer the water, but we could not.

If timber fell in price to what it was 12 months ago, and you paid 4d. per 100 feet extra, would it pay you to work your mill? No, we could not pay our way.

Have you signed any petition in favor of the bridge? Only one, for a drawbridge.

Who carries most of your timber? Short.

Are you men of capital? No, we have to work for our living.

Are you in the hands of the craftsmen? To a certain extent we are, as we are obliged to give them what they ask for freight.

Would you be in their hands as to the punting? We should either have to get them to take it down or build punts ourselves, but a new tramway would be the best method of getting the timber down.

By Mr. Lewis.-Do you know the current of the river above the proposed bridge? Yes, it runs at the deepest side, that is the Franklin side.

Would the drawbridge be liable to be blocked up? That would depend on the span.

Could there not be a guard erected above the drawbridge to protect it? I have no doubt it could be done.

By the Chairman.—How long is it since you erected your mill? 5 years.

What have you cut since you commenced? I can't tell at all.

What quantity have you shipped direct to Hobart Town? I can't say.

What quantity have you punted from your mill? I can't say, a very small quantity.

How many crafts carry for you? Sometimes one, sometimes two. How many loads have you sent? I can't tell.

Have you a frame? Yes, a wooden and iron one, 30 feet carriage between the head blocks.

You get 7s. 6d. per 100 feet now? Yes; the price before the rise was from 4s. 9d. to 5s. 3d. That would leave a difference of 2s. 6d. to 2s. 9d.? Yes.

You estimate the cost of punting at not less than 4d.? Yes; I would not do it myself for less.

What do you consider the cost of sawing timber per 100 feet? I never went into detail.

By the Chairman.-What is the cost of sawing? Perhaps about 2s. per 100 feet.

What is the cost of producing timber at the mill? About half the receipts.

You say your gross earnings are £30, and expenses £16; deducting £7 10s. for the hay bill from £16, would leave £8 10s. per week? Yes.

Then £8 10s. represents the whole of the expenses of getting the timber in and cutting it, less the hay bill and your own and Mr. Skinner's labour? Exactly.

By Mr. Mitchell.—How many men do you employ? Five men and two boys, they cost £7 10s. per week with other expenses.

By the Chairman.-How far is your mill from Crown land? Two miles.

If you had to go to Crown land for timber how far would you have to cart it? Two miles.

In two years time how far would you have to go for your timber? I can't say.

Do you consider your mill increased in value because of nearness to Crown land? Yes.

Have you any vested right to the Crown land? No.

If any of it were sold would it depreciate the value of your mill? Yes, if the whole of it were sold. Would you have any grounds of action against the Government? No, none at all. They can do what they please with their own land.

By Mr. Jackson.—How long would it take to work out your own land? We are worked out now, and rely on the Crown and private land for timber. The soil is so poor and stony that it is valuable for nothing but the timber on it.

By Mr. Riddoch.-Would a tramway be better than punting? Yes.

What would be the cost of a tramway from your mill to below bridge? I can't say.

Would the chief cost, if timber were carted, be the handling? Yes; but at present that part of the work is done at odd times, and not when a vessel is waiting, as there is always a load waiting on the jetty for them.

Would there then be any difference between the handling now and the handling on to a new tramway? No, none.

By Mr. Young.—Do you know the cost of ordinary tramways? No, I believe it would cost £100. What would be the distance from the mill to the bridge? $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.

By Mr. Riddoch.—What would be the difference in freight from your jetty, and from below bridge? That would depend on the craftsmen.

By the Chairman.-Do you and your partner work in the mill? Yes, constantly.

What do you estimate your work as worth? $\pounds 2$ per week each.

JAMES SHORT examined.

By Counsel.-You are a storekeeper and craftsman, living at Victoria? Yes.

Do you know who takes Wise and Skinner's timber to market? My barge does.

Where from? From the end of their tramway.

How far above the proposed bridge is it? $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.

Is all their timber taken direct from the tramway, or is it punted? If we have not enough produce at my jetty to make a full load for my craft, we send up a boat to the jetty for enough timber to fill up; that is, only once perhaps in 6 months. Two crafts were loading at the tramway last week.

Is the great bulk of their timber taken from the tramway? Yes, very little is punted.

For the last month how much have your crafts taken per week on an average? From 9000 to 10,000 feet per week, and there is 50,000 feet or more waiting on the jetty for us.

If you could not take your craft up to their jetty, which would be the best plan—to cart or to punt the timber? Don't know much about carting timber, but I could not undertake to get men to punt it down as the work would be too hard.

By Mr. Jackson.—What would be the hard work? Lifting the timber from a punt into a barge or on to a jetty, as it is so heavy. The timber would have to be landed up a steep bank from the punt and stacked there while the crafts were away at town.

Have you been crafting long? I have been crafting for 27 years on the Huon River, and have had constant experience; and I think that it is a hard half-day's work for three men to take a boat-load with 1500 feet of timber and bring it to the barge.

Can you assert that you could get men to punt the timber? I could not undertake to get men, as it takes three men to punt the small quantity punted now.

If you tried to carry out a contract, what would you charge Wise and Skinner? About 6d. per 100 feet.

If Mr. Wise has reckoned 4d., is he under or over the mark? It might be done for 4d., but I think he has under-stated the cost.

If the bridge is erected without a drawbridge, is there any way in which Wise and Skinner can avoid the loss of 4d. per 100 feet occasioned by punting? None that I know of.

Do you know what their receipts per week have been for the last six months? I can't tell. They get 6s. 3d. per 100 feet after the freight has been taken off.

If timber went down to 5s. per 100 feet, would it pay to punt it down? No, I think not.

By the Chairman.—Have you any personal interest in the building of the bridge? It would interfere with my business.

Where is your jetty? 200 yards above bridge.

If the bridge were put up without a drawbridge, would you consider yourself entitled to compensation? Yes, I think so; I should be injured.

Would a drawbridge meet all your objections? Yes.

Have you no idea of the number of persons likely to claim compensation? No; there are no persons who have jetties above the bridge.

By Mr. Mitchell.—In the event of a drawbridge being erected, which you would have to open and shut yourselves, would that meet your views? Yes, I would be ready to render myself liable to a penalty for neglecting to close it after me.

By Mr. Balfe.—Have you seen vessels' masts lowered? Yes, but that could not be managed with my vessel, the rig would have to be altered.

What height is your mast? 50 feet from deck to topmast.

What is your vessel's name? Catherine.

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