

(No. 58.)



1896.

SESSION II.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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MOUNT LYELL AND STRAHAN RAILWAY  
BILL, 1896, (PRIVATE):

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES OF  
THE PROCEEDINGS, EVIDENCE, AND APPENDIX.

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Assembly to be printed.

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*SELECT COMMITTEE appointed, on the 29th day of July, 1896, to consider and report upon "The Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company's Bill, 1896," (Private.)*

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. LEWIS.  
MR. GILMORE.  
MR. MCWILLIAMS.

MR. BARRETT.  
MR. URQUIHART. (*Mover.*)

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DAYS OF MEETING.

Friday, July 31; Wednesday, August 5; Wednesday, August 12; Thursday, August 13.

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WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. E. C. Driffield; Mr. T. A. Reynolds; Mr. F. Back; Mr. C. W. James; Mr. A. R. Pontifex.

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R E P O R T.

Your Committee, having taken evidence in support of the allegations contained in the Preamble of the Bill, have the honor to report that the said Preamble has been proved to their satisfaction.

Your Committee, having agreed that the Preamble should stand part of the Bill, then entered into consideration of the several clauses.

Your Committee recommend the addition of the following proviso at the end of Clause 3:—  
"Provided that the said Company shall within five years from the passing of this Act extend the said railway from Teepookana to a terminus to be approved by the Minister of Lands in or near the Town of Strahan," and the striking out of Clause 4.

A suggestion was made on behalf of the Company that it should be empowered to obtain leases for portions of the present reserve in the neighbourhood of its smelting works, but your Committee believing that the insertion of any clause giving effect to this suggestion would be foreign to the import of the notice required to be given by the Company when applying for its Bill, consider it to be outside the scope of their powers to make any recommendation thereon. The evidence pertaining thereto is submitted with the rest of the evidence for the information of your Honorable House.

Your Committee have the honor to submit the Bill with the Amendments above mentioned for the favourable consideration of your Honorable House.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

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FRIDAY, JULY 31, 1896.

*Members present*—Mr. Barrett, Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Urquhart.

Mr. Urquhart was appointed Chairman, on the motion of Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Barrett.

The Chairman laid upon the Table the Petition praying for leave to bring in the Bill.

Resolved, That Counsel be heard in support of the Bill. (Mr. Lewis.)

Accordingly, Mr. E. H. Butler appeared and addressed the Committee in support of the Bill.

Mr. E. C. Driffield, Superintending Engineer of Mount Lyell Railway Company, was called in and examined.

Mr. Driffield withdrew.

Mr. T. A. Reynolds was called in and examined.

Mr. Reynolds withdrew.

Mr. Butler handed in Statement of the actual Expenditure of the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company, Limited, since the formation of the Company to June 30, 1896.

The Committee adjourned till 11 o'clock on Wednesday, August 5, 1896.

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No. 2.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1896.

The Committee met at 11 o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Urquhart (Chairman), Mr. Lewis, Mr. Gilmore, and Mr. McWilliams.

The Minutes of last Meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. F. S. Knight, as representing Counsel in support of the Bill, was introduced.

Resolved, That Mr. Driffield be admitted during the examination of witnesses.

Mr. Frederick Back, General Manager of Government Railways, was called in and examined.

Mr. Back withdrew.

Mr. Driffield was recalled and further examined.

Mr. Driffield laid on the Table a topographical plan of the Mount Lyell Company's reduction works.

Mr. C. W. James was called in and examined.

Mr. James withdrew.

Mr. A. R. Pontifex was called in and examined.

Mr. Pontifex withdrew.

Mr. Driffield was again recalled and further examined.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

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No. 3.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 1896.

The Committee met at 11 o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Urquhart.

At 11:45, a quorum not being present, the Chairman adjourned the Committee till 12 o'clock to-morrow.

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No. 4.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1896.

The Committee met at 12 o'clock.

*Present*—Mr. Urquhart (Chairman), Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Urquhart.

The Minutes of the two last Meetings were read and confirmed.

The Committee entered into the consideration of the Bill.

Preamble agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3—

Amendments made by adding, " Provided, that the said Company shall within five years from the passing of this Act extend the said railway from Teepookana to a terminus to be approved by the Minister of Lands in or near the Town of Strahan."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4 disagreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

The Chairman submitted Draft Report, which was read and agreed to.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

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## APPENDIX A.

## THE MOUNT LYELL MINING AND RAILWAY COMPANY, LIMITED.

*EXPENDITURE* since formation of the Company on the following, to 30th June, 1896.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Mine Department, including Tramways, Mine Plant, Machinery, &c.				67,402	12	10
Reduction Works, including Brick and Saw-mill Plant.....	...			57,908	7	1
Railway Construction—						
Survey and preliminary expenses .....	10,738	11	8			
Contract No. 23 (Garnsworthy & Smith) .....	22,403	8	7			
Maintenance of above since completion.....	701	15	8			
Clearing Contracts 1/9—9 <sup>a</sup> —10 <sup>a</sup> —10/20.....	1932	11	0			
Clearing and Grubbing (expended by Mr. Driffield) .....	395	3	10			
Expenditure on formation of Railway since completion of Garnsworthy & Smith's Contract (excluding item £395 3s. 10d. above) .....	33,417	6	7			
Plant, Railway Material, Permanent Way, including Rails, Engines, Trucks, &c. ....	23,169	9	5			
All other Expenses in connection with the Company .....	...			92,758	6	9
				40,337	6	11
				<u>£258,406</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>

ALFRED MELLOR, *Secretary*.

Melbourne, 28th July, 1896.

## EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 31ST JULY, 1896.

EDWARD CARUS DRIFFIELD, *called and examined*.

1. *By Mr. E. H. Butler* (Counsel for the Applicant).—Your name is Edward Carus Driffield? Yes.
2. What are you, Mr. Driffield,—I mean, what profession do you follow? You are engaged by the Mount Lyell Company, are you not? Yes, I am the Superintending Engineer for the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company.
3. Will you tell us, Mr. Driffield, why the company you represent is asking for further powers in connection with the railway which you have been given power under the former Act of Parliament to construct? If I might be allowed to give you, briefly, the reasons why we come and ask a further concession, I will do so.
4. Quite so? Well, Mr. Butler, the concessions which my company ask for are absolutely necessary to us in so far as transferring the terminus fixed at Strahan in the original Bill to that of Teepookana, at all events for the present. Teepookana is located upon the southern bank of the King River, and this terminus has been decided upon as practically a temporary one for strictly economical reasons. When the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company decided upon Teepookana as their present terminus they were restricted by heavy financial difficulties, and in order to obtain early communication with their mine it was imperative to reduce the estimated expenditure, and to economise in every possible way, in order to make the available funds sufficient to meet the requirements.
5. Then you want Teepookana to be your temporary terminus? Yes, it was absolutely necessary to curtail expenses. After mature deliberation Teepookana was decided upon, because the King River affords excellent facilities for water carriage to that point, and is accessible at ordinary low water to light draft crafts of considerable tonnage. With a moderate expenditure for snagging and dredging the river could be made navigable for steam lighters of much larger size and tonnage than are in use at present. Further, Teepookana has the only available site in that locality which affords suitable river frontage for wharves and the necessary station-yard conveniences for the conduct of a railway traffic. [The witness here produced a plan showing the proposed terminus at Teepookana Station, Pine Cove, Strahan, and the King River, explaining to the Committee the proposed wharfs, bridges, &c.]
6. You say the river is navigable? Yes, and it will avoid the four miles of railway to Pine Cove by stopping at Teepookana.
7. Then again, there would be a saving in the amount of your expenditure, which would go towards the early completion of the railway? Yes, if we do not stop at Teepookana it will entail an additional seven and a half miles to take us to Strahan, which will cost something like £35,100. To put it another way—a saving in the estimated expenditure of either £35,100 for the construction of the additional seven and a half miles to Strahan, or £21,600 for the four miles to Pine Cove, which was temporarily effected, immediately became available for the balance of the railway.

8. Would the interests of the residents of Pine Cove, Teepookana, or Strahan be prejudicially affected by the proposal now made by your company to make your temporary stoppage at Teepookana? No; the interests of the general public, the residents of Strahan, or those of Pine Cove would not in any way be affected or prejudiced. I would also like to point out that the line stopping at Teepookana would mean that the completion of the railway and reduction works will be consummated nine months earlier than if the line is, according to the spirit of the old Act, run right into the Strahan boundary. I consider that the public will be benefited to a greater extent by the line stopping where we now ask, as water carriage opposed to rail will mean a saving to the public on the carriage of goods, whilst passengers will also benefit by cheaper fares. And as the whole of the locomotive and running sheds and repair shops are being erected at the Reduction Works, only a station-master and a few wharf labourers would be permanently located in Strahan.

9. Now, Mr. Driffield, will you kindly tell us the difference of freights and fares as between Strahan, Pine Cove, and Teepookana? From Strahan to Teepookana by rail, which is seven and a half miles, at the rate of 4*d.* per mile would come to 2*s.* 6*d.* From Strahan to Teepookana by steam launch would be 1*s.* 6*d.*, the difference on this route thus being 1*s.* From Strahan to Pine Cove by launch is 1*s.* 6*d.* From Pine Cove to Teepookana by rail is four miles, and this at 4*d.* would be 1*s.* 4*d.*, the total fare thus being 2*s.* 10*d.* From Strahan to Teepookana by launch is 1*s.* 6*d.*, thus leaving a difference between Pine Cove and Teepookana, by rail, of 1*s.* 4*d.* I do not consider that there would be any very great amount of difference between the freights by rail and water, although there is no doubt that the difference would be in favour of water carriage.

10. *By Mr. Butler.*—Is there any settlement at Pine Cove? No.

11. Then no interests can be effected? There being no settlement at Pine Cove there can be no harm done by removing the terminus to Teepookana.

12. *By the Chairman.*—What is the distance from the Strahan boundary to Teepookana? The distance from Strahan boundary to Teepookana is about 1½ miles.

13. Do you think Strahan would be benefited by the railway stopping temporarily at Teepookana? I think it would, because the present lighterage of goods by way of the King River must be beneficial to Strahan, in that it gives more work to labourers and others in the way of lighterage of goods.

14. You believe that the railway will subsequently be run to Pine Cove and Strahan, but what your company requires now is a matter of expediency, namely, to make your terminus Teepookana? Yes; I have no doubt that when the reduction works of the company are sufficiently enlarged it will be necessary to complete the railway either to Strahan or Pine Cove. There is no doubt that the district will so enlarge that it will be imperative for the company to run their line to a deep-water port, at which place they will subsequently have their terminus.

15. You say the distance from Teepookana to the Strahan boundary would be about one mile and a half? Yes; and I think it is very doubtful if station-yards could be obtainable at the latter place.

16. Could the King River carry the traffic of the Company? I think the King River would carry the traffic of the Company for years to come. A shipping company has assured me that they would be prepared to carry at least three hundred tons per day up this river.

17. *By the Chairman.*—Have you any right to carry passengers under your existing Act? We have permissive powers, and I do not know that there is any restriction against our carrying passengers during construction; but until the line has been passed by the Government Engineer, I do not think we are compelled to carry them.

18. What distance did you say it was from Strahan to Teepookana? It is seven and a half miles.

19. What river frontage would be required by the company at Teepookana? I believe a small frontage of about one hundred yards would be sufficient.

20. Now, Mr. Driffield, if you made your terminus at Teepookana, and from there you ran a feeder on to Pine Cove, would that be acting up to the spirit of the Act which you have already obtained, although not acting up to the letter of it? Yes.

21. Now, the distance from Pine Cove is greater than from Strahan to Teepookana, so that practically the water-carriage would be the same with the terminus at Teepookana as it would be at Strahan? Yes.

22. Yours is the only railway between Strahan and Queenstown? Yes, and I believe it is the only practicable route obtainable *via* the King River.

23. Can you say when the present Act expires? I believe at the end of the year.

24. When do you think, Mr. Driffield, that your company will finish the construction of the railway line to Teepookana, supposing that you are granted the right of extending it in that direction? I have no doubt that we will finish it by the end of the year. We hope to, but it may be February or March before it can be completed.

25. Do you know the boundaries of the township of Strahan? Yes.

26. Do you know that they extend to a very great distance, and that your old Act provides for bringing the railway into Strahan? Yes, the Strahan boundary has a wide scope.

27. Have you powers to run over the line? Yes, we have the ordinary permissive power of railways to carry freights. I think that until we have the line inspected and passed by the Government Engineer, the operation of the Act cannot come into force.

28. You must come to water somehow? Yes, Sir; in the meantime we can carry our own goods, and as far as I am aware, there is nothing to prevent us from obliging the public.

29. Are you now carrying goods? Yes.

30. As a matter of fact, you have carried goods over the different sections of the railway line after construction? Yes, we have carried goods.

31. When your Act expires at the end of the year, you want to put your by-laws into force immediately? Yes. I might again repeat that I believe the line will be finished by the end of the year, but it may possibly be February or March before the completion is effected.

32. Have you read the Bill? Yes.

33. You will see, Mr. Driffield, that the third section of the Bill provides that "Notwithstanding anything contained in the said Act, the said railway may be constructed, maintained, and worked along a

route approved by the Minister of Lands in accordance with the provisions of the said Act from a point in or near the sections of mineral land held by the said Company at Mount Lyell to a terminus at or near the locality known as Teepookana." This gives the Mount Lyell Railway Company powers in perpetuity as making Teepookana their final terminus? Yes.

34. Would this be the ultimate terminus? No. When the traffic extends we will have to get to a deep-water port.

35. Your surveyors have mapped out the only practicable route? Yes.

36. Provided the Parliament does not approve of granting a terminus at Teepookana in perpetuity, would your company be satisfied with a limitation? If the Bill would not be passed in its present form I would favour a time limit, in order that we could go on with the line.

37. What limit? Nothing less than five years.

38. I would like to point out to you, Mr. Driffield, that the existing Act provides that you shall come to the town of Strahan. Strahan has very extended boundaries, which, no doubt, you are aware of, but by coming to the boundary of Strahan you would be fulfilling the letter of the Act though not the spirit of it? Yes, Sir.

39. *By Mr. Lewis.*—Is there any township at Teepookana? Teepookana is a growing place, and the inhabitants at present would number, I should think, between 80 and 100 persons.

40. Do you know whether the Government has sold land there for residence? I do not know.

41. What is the distance from Teepookana to the Strahan wharves? About eight miles. The company's wharves are at the other side of the Bay. There is half-a-mile difference between them.

42. Have you any knowledge of the difficulties of getting across the King River? The foundations would be the greatest difficulty.

43. There is little doubt, then, that there would be some difficulty? Yes.

44. Would crossing the King River by a bridge impede the traffic? It might temporarily.

45. What depth have you at the bar entrance to the King River? I should think about four feet.

46. Have you ever made any estimate of the cost of the line from Teepookana to Long Bay? Yes, about £35,100.

47. *By Mr. Barrett.*—That river will always be useful to carry the main traffic? Yes.

48. Would it not be advisable to build a bridge at the mouth? The surveys prevent that.

49. It might not be advisable to stop the traffic by building a bridge? A bridge need not stop navigation, for a larger span could be built, which would, of course, mean more expense to the Company.

50. Do you think it would be advisable to put a bridge further up? It would be impossible to get a survey, as the country is so rocky and precipitous.

51. Towards the mouth of the river you intend to have the bridge? Yes; the bridge is about 2½ miles down the river, which would be spanned over.

52. *By Mr. Gilmore.*—What is the approximate cost of the bridge? I would like a little time to furnish figures, as I have no estimate with me.

53. I understand that with a little expense the span could be enlarged? Well, the word "little" might become "large" before the job is finished. It would be necessary for me to get the approximate cost before I could say. I could supply it later on to-day.

54. *By Mr. Butler.*—What has been the cost of the railway so far? The total cost of the railway to the 15th of July has been £92,758 6s. 9d. This amount has all been spent on the railway irrespective of other works.

55. *By the Chairman.*—What will be the total cost to Teepookana? The total cost to Teepookana will be approximately £125,836 14s. 1d., including surveys. That is the gross cost.

56. *By Mr. Gilmore.*—What length of spans would you require for the bridge? The spans of the bridge would be 20 feet, and the bridge would be, speaking from memory, about 25 feet or 30 feet above water.

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THOMAS AUGUSTUS REYNOLDS, *called and examined.*

57. *By Mr. Butler.*—Your name is Thomas Augustus Reynolds? Yes.

58. And you are a member of the firm of Reynolds & Company? Yes.

59. Where does your company trade? To the West Coast.

60. Do you know the King River? Yes, I am acquainted with it and also the proposed terminus of the Mount Lyell Railway Company at Teepookana.

61. Do you think Teepookana suitable for a terminus? Yes, and the reasons I do so are that the site is most suitable for a landing-place. There is good water, and there is also more level country. There is more level country there than within a short distance where they could get a landing.

62. What is the actual distance from the boundary of Strahan to Teepookana? I cannot say the actual distance from the boundary of Strahan.

63. What do you think? Somewhere about 2½ miles, I suppose, or perhaps between one mile and two.

64. You cannot be positive? No, I am not sure; I cannot be positive whether it is more than that or not.

65. Have you been across the country? No; I have always travelled up the river; the country is, I believe, very much broken.

66. What has been your experience of water and rail carriage? With my experience of rail and water carriage my opinion as regards whether the establishment of a terminus at Teepookana would be prejudicial or otherwise to the general public distinctly points to the fact that water carriage is always the cheaper.

67. From the experience you have had in water and railway carriage, what in your opinion would be the effect of the terminus being at Teepookana on the public generally—would it be prejudicial or other-

wise? As far as the cost of travelling from Strahan to Teepookana by rail or water, I should say water would be the cheaper of the two.

68. Do you know of any interests that would be prejudicially affected by the proposed terminus? I am not aware of any.

69. It is all hilly country, thick bush or scrub,—there are no inhabitants there? No. It depends on the state of the river at present as to what could be taken up or otherwise. Water carriage can take all the traffic.

70. That depends on the number of steamers or lighters employed; strictly speaking the river varies excepting at flood time; the variation seems to be from 4 feet 6 inches to 2 feet 6 inches. In flood time there would be a much greater depth? Yes.

71. Is that equal to three hundred tons a day to Teepookana? There could be arrangements made to take that quantity up, with the exception of perhaps in flood time. There must be inconvenience then, but we have been in the trade for some time, and have never had any serious stoppage at all.

72. Then at present water carriage is equal to the traffic, or is it equal to any traffic that is likely to go up to Teepookana for some time to come? I think so. For some time it has not been sufficient to keep the little fleet going as it is.

73. *By Mr. Urquhart.*—Will the traffic not be greater when the Mount Lyell Railway is completed and the smelters are in full blast, when of course now things are in a state of chaos? I don't anticipate much more traffic for a long time than I have seen to Teepookana. When you take into consideration that the whole of the plant and materials to construct the works has been taken that way there is not likely to be any great increase of traffic.

74. You mean the rush was when they sent up all the rails and machinery? Yes.

75. All the materials in connection with the smelters were sent up by rail? Quite so.

76. And all coke has been sent up by rail? I don't think the extra work thrown on the railway will exceed what it has been during the rapid construction of the works and railway.

77. You say that water carriage is cheaper than the rail? Yes.

78. That is in so far as the traffic between Hobart and Queenstown is concerned? No, from Strahan to Teepookana. Supposing the railway was completed and taking goods from Strahan, it would cost more than it does at the present time. That is what I mean.

79. Supposing goods coming from Zeehan or from Queenstown, there would be the expense of putting the goods on the steamer and discharging them: would not that make up the extra cost of carriage? That would depend upon what kind of material it was.

80. Well, there would in any case be the cost of carting from the railway station, besides labour and so forth, that would go on to the freight, would it not? What would the goods cost a ton to discharge? About a shilling a ton.

81. And what do you charge to take them up? Three shillings a ton.

82. And what is the freight for that distance? About a shilling a ton, and then it would be cheaper. In connection with that the Zeehan railway comes right along the wharf, and it is easier to put the goods on board vessels there than to put them on the Mount Lyell train. Then they would have to be taken across the river.

83. Suppose they got a branch line to junction, and did not take goods off the trucks at all, but just junctioned with the other line? Well, in that sense it might be of advantage. If both lines were of the same gauge they could of course branch off the trucks.

84. *By Mr. Butler.*—As a matter of fact, very little goods ever go from Zeehan to Mount Lyell? Yes, very little.

85. Of course, if the junction ever took place, they would provide the right kind of truck? I presume so.

WEDNESDAY, 5TH AUGUST.

FREDERICK BACK, *called and examined.*

86. *By the Chairman.*—Your name is Frederick Back? Yes.

87. And you are General Manager of Railways for Tasmania? Yes.

88. Do you know anything about the Mount Lyell Railway Bill? Yes, I have read the Bill.

89. Under that Bill the Company have to construct a railway from Mount Lyell to a terminus at or near the town of Strahan? Yes, so I understand.

90. And the company now desire to fix their terminus at Teepookana? Yes, so I understand.

91. Do you think that place suitable; or if the terminus was at Strahan, how would a separate branch affect the traffic? I don't think a separate branch would affect the interests of the Government railways. I understand the terminus is to be at a spot in or near the town of Strahan, in fact it may be a couple of miles away from the present wharf. The company have the power to make a terminus at a site to be approved by the Minister, which may be a mile or more from the present wharf.

92. By this plan it speaks of taking the railway down to Pine Cove: were that done would it be within the meaning of the Act? Yes, I think so; as far as I can see the Government Railways would have no interest in making any connection. The question as to whether the line should come into the town of Strahan is a matter I cannot give an opinion upon; I may say, briefly, that if the traffic anticipated from Mount Lyell be realised, then the existing wharves will be inadequate to carry on the business. When the works are complete I anticipate there will be a very large increase of business, and the amount of traffic to be taken from Strahan would be as much calculated at per cube foot as would come down. If the line were constructed to our terminus at Strahan I do not think it would be any advantage, because I understand, and I think wisely, that the Mount Lyell Railway Company are going to use automatic breaks, and that would create trouble with the railway stock. The Abt system, being 4 inches above the level of our trucks, would call for alterations in our couplings.

93. And you think it would be necessary to tranship in any case? That is my impression.

94. The Act provides that the Minister of Lands must approve of the site for the station: he might approve of any other site than yours? Quite so. I don't see any objection in the proposal to junction with the Government railways. Of course increased wharf accommodation would be necessary.

95. On the part of the Government? I cannot say.

96. You know the road to Ring River: is that the only available route? I can't say.

97. I mean by general report or your information? I don't know if it is the only route.

98. If the Government were to construct a railway to Queenstown, do you know of any other route? I do not at present know of another route, but I would have one searched for.

99. Do you know the distance from Teepookana to Strahan? About four miles.

100. Not more—I meant from Teepookana across to Strahan? I meant from the mouth of the river—from seven and a-half to eight miles about.

101. Then, as far as the travelling public is concerned, it is no advantage to get into a steamer to go to Teepookana if the people were from Strahan. It would not matter to the travelling public whether they go to Teepookana or Pine Cove? It would be about the same thing.

102. And you consider it would not affect the public? I consider if you should make the terminus outside Strahan it will not affect the interests of the Government railways.

103. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you think the public interests will in any way suffer by the proposed change? As far as I know I don't think they will suffer.

104. And you state the Government railway will not be affected by the change at all? No. I think, from a public point of view, that the interests of the public will not be affected by the Bill. There is nothing in common between the two railways.

EDWARD CARUS DRIFFIELD, *recalled and examined.*

105. *By the Chairman.*—You produce a plan of the Mount Lyell Company's property? I do. This plan shows the whole of the ground now held by the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company, but it has nothing to do with the mine itself. The hatched areas show the ground held, and the dotted areas on the plan the ground the Company desires to obtain, and which they are about to apply for. The plan shows the whole of the ground surrounding the reduction works. When Dr. Peters came here to report, it became evident that to work the mine profitably an extensive scale of operations at the smelting works would have to be carried out. He prepared for roasting operations which would have entailed the taking up of a large area of ground for furnaces, &c. The Company could not at that time go on with the works, at least until the surveys were more completed for locating the railway, and assistance was consequently sought from the Government to make a reserve of two thousand acres surrounding the proposed site of the works. This was done, and the reserve is still in operation, but we understand it is now the intention of the Government to resume this reserve very shortly.

106. You mean, to throw it open for selection? Yes; to throw it open again as before. To this there would be no objection if, when such action is taken, no lease will be granted until the Company just get enough land around for the protection of the works. If the ground were thrown open to-morrow, it would be immediately pegged, and people might block us by putting in their pegs on the very ground absolutely required by us, and so cause no end of trouble. What we wish is to ask Parliament under this Bill to let us have what ground is required for the purposes of carrying on ore reduction and obtaining fluxes, and leases for buildings that have to be added to the works. The blocks marked A, B, D, E, and C on the plan show the leases that have been added with a view to the supply of fluxes.

107. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Then I understand this plan is to enable you to obtain special leases? Precisely so. The company's last half-yearly report explains the proposal and the plans.

(Committee deliberated.)

108. *By the Chairman.*—It is a question whether this Committee can go into that. We might make a recommendation. Proceed Mr. Driffield.—I was explaining the connection of the various leases. A, B, C, D, and E were specially selected because of their having fluxes on them, that is, silica and limestone. When the works were originally located very little flux was available, but after a good deal of prospecting the supplies on these sections were found. No doubt other deposits will be found, but I may say that the supplies of fluxes seem very limited. We will have five furnaces running very soon now, and we want to be sure of having full supplies of flux. J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R on the plan are five-acre machinery sites, and have been added to the area solely for the purpose of putting up additional smelters. It is the intention of the company, as soon as they possibly can, to extend the plant to ten furnaces, which will be capable of treating from 1000 to 1400 tons of ore a day. These will require a great deal of room to work, and also for storage purposes. S T sections have been taken up for greater accommodation on the railway all along the route of the haulage line. S and P have been taken up as marked on plan solely for the purpose of protecting the works, that is, to stop people from sending their débris down upon us. There is a declivity there, a hill rising from 600 to 800 feet, and if we were not protected anybody might stop the works. There is no mineral working there at present, but there might be in future, and any man who wished to be obstructive might lower the whole of his débris on to us, and we would have no legal redress whatever. The winding engine is on the top of the hill as marked.

109. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—All the lines you have shown are in the easements leased as shown on your plan? Yes.

110. And are all within the reserve of 2000 acres? Yes. V, W, and X will be very necessary as soon as we can extend the furnaces, in fact they must have the ground to enable them to protect the railway surveys and works.

111. What is the width of the easement? About 33 feet.



112. Would you not have room to work in that width? You might duplicate the line, but you could not carry on the works, and you would have no place to deposit the spoil, and there will be a great deal of that. I don't know whether Mr. Sticht has any other proposals to make, but I can only refer to the parties here.

113. *By the Chairman.*—This land is not required with a view to working for minerals at all? No, with the exception of fluxes.

114. Then, if the Minister saw a way to lease these lands for mineral purposes to other people, and proper provision could be made so that the lessees would not interfere with your works, you would not object? It could not be done at all. If proper provision is to be made for our protection the ground could not at the same time be worked for mineral purposes.

115. Not if the mineral lessees were bound not to interfere with you? That would cripple them both; it could not be done.

116. *By Mr. Lewis.*—What do you do now with the slag and rubbish from the smelters? It is being tipped over a dump marked here on the plan.

117. Would the company be willing to pay ordinary rent for these leases? I believe so. I understand they would prefer that.

118. If they are for limestone? Yes.

119. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—The fact is the company want to keep anybody else off? Yes, from obstructing them; and that is the only way to work with success. The Directors asked me to emphasise the fact that they have already spent £258,000 on the works, and that they will as soon as possible have ten furnaces going, and they feel that they are legitimately entitled to the protection of Ministers and Parliament for the work done and in fully carrying out their original proposals.

120. To make it successful the work must be done on a large scale? Yes, it must be on a large scale.

121. *By the Chairman.*—The leases you require come to about 500 acres out of the 2000 acres reserved. Yes, about 500 acres.

122. *By Mr. Gilmore.*—You were to put in some figures as to the approximate cost of the proposed bridge over the King River? Yes, the information has been handed in.

123. You remember that on Friday last I asked you as to the approximate cost of the bridge, and you required time to work it out? Yes, I have since gone into figures and find that the approximate cost will be about £3300.

124. Will the traffic on the river be interfered with by the bridge. I see, in answer to Mr. Barrett, you said, "A bridge need not stop navigation, for a larger span could be built, which would of course mean more expense to the Company." In the estimate you have given has this been considered? I estimated the bridge to have two 80 ft. spans over the main channel. That would give you 150 feet of clear water. The height would be from 25 to 30 feet by high water.

125. And that would give ample room for navigation: what class of vessels would be used? Small steamers and steam lighters, which don't carry masts. There would be no trouble in regard to the height at all, if you give them plenty of width in the beam.

126. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know there is a special Act, called the Mount Lyell Railway Act, 1893? I believe so, Sir.

127. Would the matter you are bringing forward now as to lands be more an amendment of that Act than of a Railway Act? Probably it would.

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CHARLES WORDSWORTH JAMES, *C.E.*, called and examined.

128. *By Mr. Knight (representing Mr. E. H. Butler, Counsel for the Applicant).*—What is your name? Charles Wordsworth James.

129. What is your profession? I am a consulting and civil engineer.

130. Have you read the Bill to amend the Mount Lyell Railway Act? I have not read the Bill, but I am fully aware of its purpose.

131. Are you acquainted with the country around Mount Lyell and King River? Yes, very well.

132. Do you know the Strahan terminus and the Teepookana terminus of the railway? Yes, very well.

133. Do you think it desirable the present terminus at Teepookana should still remain? Yes; I believe it will answer the requirements of the Mount Lyell Company for many years to come.

134. Give the Committee your reasons for stating that the Teepookana terminus will serve the purposes of the Company for years to come? Yes. In the first place they have very good water-carriage between Strahan and Teepookana, and undoubtedly water-carriage is cheaper than rail-carriage. There would be no difficulty, as far as I can see, in carrying a very heavy traffic up the river; there may be a few shallow places that want clearing, but there would be very little expense or difficulty in adapting the river for heavy traffic. The fact that the Mount Lyell Mining Company got all their heavy rolling stock, rails, and building materials up is sufficient reason for stating that it will carry such heavy traffic.

135. You mean the railway plant, not machinery? Yes; I mean the engines and general railway plant. I did not mean the machinery for the smelting works.

136. Do you think Teepookana suitable for a terminus? It is the only place available with deep water frontage; perhaps the "lower landing" might have been better were it not for the "rock bar" in the river, which limits the water traffic to Teepookana, and points to it as the best site.

137. Is the country level there? There is a level patch there, but it is not otherwise level; it is hilly, but there is a good site for a township about a quarter of a mile above the wharf at Teepookana.

138. Do you know of any interest likely to be prejudicially affected by the present terminus? None whatever.

139. Are there any people living there? Yes, now there were from 200 to 300 people living there; that was owing to the railway starting. When the railway commenced the navvies and their wives and families came there, and stores were also put up there to supply them.

140. And when the line is finished to Teepookana, do you think it would be dearer to send goods under the present conditions of service or by rail—which do you think would be the cheaper route? Well, water carriage is always the cheaper. There is certainly this [difference: shifting and rehandling goods is always an extra cost for labour, but taking it on the whole, I am of opinion the present water carriage would be cheaper than running by rail.

141. What is the distance from Teepookana to Strahan? About  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles. It is 8 miles by water.

142. I believe you have taken soundings in the river at Teepookana? Yes, I made a hydrographic survey of about a quarter of a mile of it in this locality.

143. And what about a site for wharfage purposes? The Teepookana site is the best that could be got. Of course the river is subject to floods, and very heavy floods too, but the wharves have been built to accommodate the traffic to the floods.

144. You know where the Strahan boundary is? Yes.

145. Do you think a more suitable site for a station could be got there? I don't think any better site than the present one could be got there.

146. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you think it would be better to run a line by water to a point lower down and then join the railway? The handling in that case is the same; it might entail an additional cost of traffic. Water carriage is generally about half the cost of railway traffic. If you go into the matter you will find the balance will be in favour of water carriage.

147. You could not abolish the water carriage altogether? Well, the railway would have to be taken across the river again a mile or two lower down, and then on into Strahan wharf, and connected with the Government lines of railway there.

148. And that would cost a lot of money? Yes; but the river is so deep that the traffic can be taken right through. It would be flying in the face of Providence not to use it. There is no difficulty in getting up.

149. What is the depth at low water? It varies. At the mouth the depth over the bar is about four feet. Of course the traffic could be taken over by train if there was a bridge across the river higher up. The river runs from 40 to 80 feet deep at places.

150. What draught of boat could get up there? Vessels drawing 3 feet 6 inches or 3 feet 8 inches.

151. When there is that only, could such a boat get over the bar? Yes; there is about four feet of water. You could not get more than four feet as a rule.

152. Is there much fall in the tide? No, but there is always a down current in the river.

153. Is there much tide there,—much difference between high and low-water? Yes, at times. At spring tides the water sometimes rises very high, but this is exceptional. At other times the difference of tide is scarcely noticeable.

[Mr. Driffield here said that vessels with a draught of fifteen inches were capable of carrying up to 100 tons, and should have no difficulty in getting to Teepookana.]

154. *By Mr. Knight.*—Would there be any difficulty in deepening the bar by means of training walls? No difficulty whatever.

155. Would it be much expense? Well, it might cost a thousand or two, or something like that. It would not be a very serious work.

156. What depth could be got between the training walls? You could get six feet; you don't want more depth than that.

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ARTHUR RUPERT PONTIFEX, *called and examined.*

157. *By Mr. Knight.*—What is your name? Arthur Rupert Pontifex.

158. What are you? I am a resident at Strahan.

159. How long have you been resident there? About six or seven years.

160. Are you well acquainted with the King River? Fairly well; I have been up and down a good many times.

161. You know the present terminus at Teepookana? I have been there several times; yes.

162. Do you think that a suitable terminus for the Mount Lyell Railway? Well, I don't know at all; in what way?

163. Is the country level—is there good depth of water in the King River there? I believe so; yes, there is at the terminus.

164. Is the country flat about Teepookana? Not at all flat, it is hilly.

165. Do you think the residents at Strahan would be prejudiced by having a station at Teepookana—I mean the interests of the residents at Strahan, would they be prejudiced? In what way?

166. *By the Chairman.*—You know the Mount Lyell Railway Company's Act? Yes.

167. You know that by the Act the company can take a railway in or near Strahan to any point within the township that may be approved by the Minister. Under the Act they can make a terminus at Pine Cove, which would be quite within the provisions of the Act. Now, assume that the terminus was at Pine Cove, would it not be quite as convenient to the travelling public going to Teepookana as going to Pine Cove? Quite.

168. The distance is about the same one way as the other? Yes, the distance is about the same.

169. Would it be desirable to make Teepookana a terminus in perpetuity, or to give the company a respite for a certain time,—would it be better for the public to give a respite? That depends on how far it would come down.

170. To deep water? I don't know of any deep water at the mouth of the King River.

171. Well, to Pine Cove for instance? Yes, it would be more convenient to the public if it went to Pine Cove.

172. The Mount Lyell Railway Company have spent a large amount of money. Would it be better for the company if their station remained at Teepookana, or only give them a certain time and come then to Pine Cove if necessary? Yes, I think that would be better for the company to remain at Teepookana at present.

173. That is the feeling of the Strahan people? Yes, I think so.

174. What is the feeling,—to give them the right? The Strahan people think that merely to bring the railway into Strahan would not benefit the people of Strahan in the least. The township is of such an immense area you would bring the railway into Strahan by bringing it a few hundred yards, or say half a mile down the river.

175. And that would be no benefit to the town of Strahan? No, not the least.

176. Well, the Minister has to approve where the terminus shall be? Yes, I believe so.

177. Then, having that power, could he not say that the railway must go to the present township; Yes; but the present township goes to Sophia Point; that would be no good to the present settlement.

178. Well, let us say to the present settlement? Yes, that would do, to the present settlement.

179. Then you don't think the people of Strahan would object, if they had time to consider, as to where the terminus should be? I think the people of Strahan would like to see the terminus in the present settlement.

180. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—What is the area of the present township? Well, I think it is about the largest township in the colonies. It must be some thousands of acres.

181. *By the Chairman.*—Can you say the Strahan people would not object, whatever the ultimate result to the Mount Lyell Company may be. I understand the Strahan people do not want to hamper the company in any way? No, I am sure they do not.

182. And your opinion is a reflex of the public opinion at Strahan? Yes, I believe so.

183.—*By Mr. McWilliams.*—What about the navigation of the King River—is it a good navigable river? Not particularly good. Parts of it are very shallow.

184. *By the Chairman.*—There are only two places that are the shallowest? Yes, two places are shallowest,—that is up to the terminus at Teepookana. The river is quite navigable to that point, but there are two places shallow.

185. What class of barge can go up? Any flat-bottomed boat can go up, also small steam launches.

186. What draught? Well, 2 feet 6 inches. I think now and then larger vessels can go up. Larger barges have gone over the bar: that has been when there was a slight flood in the river.

187. Well, in ordinary times—not flood times—is there not from three to four feet water in the river? I believe a launch with a draught of from two feet six inches to three feet could go up. Then there are barges going up having about that draught and flat-bottomed boats.

188. *By Mr. Knight.*—Then there is nothing to prevent the river from being used. In reference to shallowness is there anything to prevent the shallows being removed? I cannot say if the shallows can be removed.

189. Do you know the depth of water on the bar of the King River? The depth varies with the time of the year and the rainfall.

190. What is the lowest you have known it? I can't tell you what is the lowest.

191. What is the lowest you have seen on the bar? Well I have been stuck on it in a rowing-boat. That was some years ago and I may not have stuck to the proper course or channel. I was in a rowing-boat and not accustomed to the channel. I may have gone out of the channel. The channel was not pegged out at that time; it is all marked now.

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EDWARD CARUS DRIFFIELD, *recalled and examined.*

192. *By Mr. McWilliams.*—Do you know the bar? Yes, I know it well.

193. Do you anticipate any difficulty in the navigation of the river? None whatever. I believe the river in its present state will prove ample for the traffic. I might add that for a small sum of money it could be made very safe in the shallows, and with a little dredging it could be made deep enough.

The Committee adjourned *sine die.*