

MEMORANDUM for the UNDER-SECRETARY, Mines Department, Wellington. *Re* Kumara Water-race and Sludge-channel Report.

Mines Department, Wellington, 24th October, 1884.

IN reply to the letter of the Chairman of the Gold Fields and Mines Committee of the 23rd instant, forwarded to the Hon. the Minister of Mines, I have the honour to state that the sum mentioned in my report on Kumara Water-race and Sludge-channel, namely, £173,143 11s. 8d., is made up as follows:—

Waimea portion of water-race	...	...	...	£118,575	15	2
Kumara portion of water-race	...	...	...	37,367	4	0
Kumara Sludge-channel	...	...	...	17,200	12	6
Total	...	...	...	£173,143	11	8

It was only on the two latter items that I was questioned when giving evidence before the Gold Fields and Mines Committee.

The first portion of these works was commenced about two and a half years before the Kumara Gold Field broke out. The original scheme was to bring in a water-supply to the Waimea district, which is on the opposite side of the ridge from the watershed of the Kumara District.

The revenue derived from the Waimea portion of the water-race came far below expectations; but when the Kumara Gold Field broke out it opened up a means of using the surplus water.

Although the Waimea and Kumara Water-races appear as separate undertakings, their supply comes from the same source, and they are so connected together that their administration cannot be separated; they are therefore worked conjointly, and known now as the Waimea-Kumara Water-race.

HENRY A. GORDON,
Inspecting Engineer.

The CHAIRMAN, Gold Fields and Mines Committee, to the Hon. the MINISTER of MINES.

SIR,—

Wellington, 6th November, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 27th October (but which only reached me yesterday), in *re* the report of Mr. Inspecting Engineer Gordon upon the report of the Gold Fields and Mines Committee; and which you must pardon me for saying is an unprecedented innovation on the practice of Parliament.

Mr. Gordon's explanation is not satisfactory. The only public works considered, or which were brought under the consideration of the Committee, were the Kumara Water-race and Sludge-channel (or tail-race), of the value, as specified by Mr. Gordon, of £54,567.

The Waimea Water-race has nothing whatever to do with the report of the Committee, the recommendations of which it is my duty to impress most strongly upon the Government, and the more so because of the strangely-developed hostility of the Inspecting Engineer.

If the Waimea Water-race is a part of the whole scheme, Mr. Gordon must have misled the Committee deliberately, as he was asked to make a statement without any restriction touching the business before the Committee. His statement *now* is that he was not "questioned" respecting a matter of which the Committee as a body had no knowledge. But it is evident that he considered the matter of importance, and, if he thought so after the inquiry only, he has laid himself open to the charge of having misled the Committee by the concealment of necessary information.

I have, &c.,

VINCENT PYKE,
Chairman, Gold Fields and Mines Committee.

The Hon. the Minister of Mines.