

1898.

NEW ZEALAND.

HURUNUI-BLUFF RAILWAY: EXTENSION TO BLENHEIM

(ESTIMATE OF COST OF).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 15th July, 1898.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House,—(1.) Any data the Government has in its possession as to the estimated cost of extending the Hurunui-Bluff line from Culverden to Blenheim, and the mileage to be constructed as by the route originally contemplated. (2.) Any similar data as to the cost and mileage of such extension if taken by way of Cheviot."—(Hon. Major STEWARD.)

MEMORANDUM by Mr. P. S. HAY, M.A., M.Inst.C.E., Superintending Engineer, Public Works Department, *re* Completion of Railway, Culverden to Blenheim.

THE originally contemplated route, Culverden to Blenheim, seems to have been the Green Hills route, *via* Waiau Township, Green Hills, Kaikoura, and the coast. No estimate of the cost of a line by this route appears to have been made, but Mr. W. N. Blair, in his report of 1879, says the cost would be about the same as the Cheviot Hills route. The total distance from Picton to Christchurch by this route is given as 212 miles, and the length now to be made is 122 miles. On eight miles of this length the formation has been done.

The extension of the line from Culverden to Blenheim, considered by the Royal Commission of 1883—Middle Island Railway Extension—was the central route, *via* Waiau Township, Hossack Pass, Acheron, Clarence, and Wairau River Valleys. Two estimates of cost are given: one founded on Mr. J. G. Blackett's report is £1,400,000; the other, on Mr. C. Y. O'Connor's report, is £1,290,000 for the length of 175 miles then requiring to be constructed from Waikari to Blenheim. There are now 156 miles to be constructed by this route, from Culverden to Blenheim, and the cost would be, say, £1,240,000 or £1,130,000. The total distance, Picton to Christchurch, by this route is given at 243 to 245 miles.

The distance, Picton to Christchurch, by the coast or Cheviot Hills route was taken at 205 miles by the 1883 Royal Commission, but the figures are greater on some other papers. The length now to be constructed from Waipara to Blenheim would be about 144 miles, on eight miles of which the formation is completed. At the mileage rate of Mr. W. N. Blair's report of 1879 the cost to complete would be about £1,100,000; but the Royal Commission apparently took Mr. C. Y. O'Connor's estimate, which is £150,000 higher than Mr. Blair's. The estimate to complete the line by this route may therefore be taken either as £1,100,000 or £1,250,000. The following sections have been surveyed on the Cheviot Hills route: Blenheim to Starborough, 15 miles 48 chains; estimated cost, £111,000. Kahautara to Waiau River, 26 miles 57 chains; estimated cost, £449,900. Waiau River to Greta, 22 miles; estimated cost, £101,150.

A list of printed papers and reports dealing with the various routes is attached.

Public Works Office, Wellington, 9th August, 1898.

P. S. HAY.

TABULAR SUMMARY.

Route.	Length, Picton to Christchurch.	Length now to make.	Estimated to complete.
Green Hills	212 miles ...	122 miles* ...	...
Central	245 miles ...	156 miles ...	£1,240,000 or £1,130,000
Cheviot	205 miles ...	144 miles* ...	£1,100,000 or £1,250,000

* Eight miles of formation finished.

LIST OF PAPERS, REPORTS, ETC.

Parliamentary Papers: E.-4, 1875; E.-1, 1876, pages 35 to 42; E.-8, 1878; E.-8A, 1878; E.-1, 1879, pages 60 to 71; D.-1, 1882, pages 61 to 63; D.-2, 1883, Report, Royal Commission Middle Island Railway Extension.

Evidence of Engineers examined by Royal Commission, D.-2, 1883: J. G. Blackett, page 44; E. Dobson, pages 1, 2, and 3; H. B. Huddleston, pages 7 and 8; C. Y. O'Connor, page 18; J. C. Richmond, page 41, and Appendices (pages 59 to 66); John Rochfort, pages 44, 47, and 51; C. Y. O'Connor, Report to Royal Commission, with tables, pages 69 to 88.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,325 copies), 18s. 6d.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1898.