

954. *Dr. Findlay.*] Were any ever repainted?—No, not in the Midland Company's time.

955. *The Chairman.*] In reporting on a building to the Traffic Manager or to your superior officer, do you report that a building is in good order if it requires a coat of paint?—I would report the building in good order, except that it required a coat of paint. It would be classified in the usual way—"Painting required."

956. Do you report a building to be in good order when it requires a coat of paint?—Yes, I do.

957. That is the usual report to the Railway Department?—That was for the Midland Company.

958. Are you sure you have mentioned all the buildings on the line in that report?—I think so.

959. I want to know exactly?—I think I have missed Mr. Musgrave's house, which has been removed.

960. Do you know the size of the carriage-shed?—I cannot say; it is a big shed.

961. Is it 500 ft. long?—I do not think so.

962. What length do you think?—I should take it to be 400 ft. long.

963. What width?—About 50 ft.

964. Did you examine the shed before you wrote that report?—I looked round all the buildings.

965. Was there a store there?—That is what I call the cement-shed. There is a lean-to attached to the engine-shed.

966. Was there a stable there?—There was, but it is partly gone. It has been cut in half, but the floor is left there.

967. Have you got that down?—No.

968. Do you consider the water service to be a portion of the station-yards and buildings?—Yes.

969. Have you reported on it?—No; I have only reported on the permanent-way and buildings.

970. Any huts there?—Two huts.

971. Have you those down?—No, I have not.

972. So your own report is, on your own admission, incomplete?—I put what I have down there for my own information. They are my notes.

973. Do you expect the Commission to accept that as a report on the condition of the buildings along the line?—I have got the station-buildings and the goods-sheds.

974. Were you asked to report on all the buildings on the line?—I was instructed to prepare what information you required, and I prepared those notes for my own guidance under examination.

975. You did not prepare it complete on your own admission?—Complete to my own satisfaction and for my own purposes.

976. But you have not told the Commissioners of all the buildings along the line?—Oh, I think so; with the exception of two huts and a stable.

977. Now, considering that you were along the line five years after it was seized, can you tell us the condition these buildings were in last February, when you went along the line?—They have been repaired, and alterations have been made to the different buildings. They have been painted and improved.

978. Do you understand the value of buildings?—In a general way I know what a building is like, but I do not know the value of it.

979. Is it part of your work to look after the buildings?—I have not done that in the Government service for the last five years. I am classified as Inspector of Permanent-way. Another man looks after the buildings.

980. *Mr. Fraser.*] You do not hand the report you have read from in as a report on the state of the buildings: it is a memorandum for your own guidance in giving evidence?—Yes.

981. And therefore any omissions do not affect it?—That is so; it is a statement on my own behalf.

982. *Mr. Graham.*] You have simply made a statement as to the condition of the buildings, and you did that to refresh your memory in giving evidence?—That is so; to guide me while under cross-examination.

983. *The Chairman.*] If you do not stand by that report as your evidence, will you please tell me what was the condition of the buildings on the 25th May, 1895?—I reckon they were in good order.

984. Do you reckon that you told the Commission about all the buildings?—With the exception of what we mentioned just now—two huts and a cottage.

985. What condition were the sleepers in, starting at the connection of the Midland Railway with the Government line at Brunnerton?—From Brunner to Nelson Creek was an old section, and the sleepers were birch and silver-pine mixed. The birch sleepers depreciated considerably.

986. How much in value?—I should reckon the life of some of the sleepers would be three years, and some of them are there yet.

987. Some of the sleepers you reckoned would last three years after you examined them in 1895, and some of them are there yet?—Yes.

988. Do you mean three years and five years includes all the sleepers between Brunnerton and Nelson Creek?—Yes; the other sections were comparatively new.

989. Going from Nelson Creek to Reefton, and then from Stillwater to Jackson's, can you tell us the condition the sleepers were in in 1895?—The sleepers had depreciated considerably.

990. How much in money-value?—I should say 25 per cent.—I am speaking of the birch sleepers.