

34. Can you state the net cost of labour and material for the three A engines?—The three A locomotives under discussion were built for—wages, £2,531 4s. 4d.; material, £1,779 0s. 2d. That is a total of £4,310, and in that is included the cost of fitting the Westinghouse brake (£210), and the cost of painting (£38). Thirty-eight pounds is our cost of painting, but the contract people only paint in lead colour, which would probably run into £18 or £20. That means that the total cost of our locomotive was £4,310, and if you add to that the profit or commission which we charge on our locomotives—namely, £647—it brings the total cost of the engine up to £4,957. The percentage we charge as profit or commission is 15 per cent.

35. The contractor does not fit the Westinghouse brake, so that the net cost for labour and material of the A locomotive at Addington is £4,062?—Yes.

36. Add to that £20 for preparation and painting done on the contract engine, and it makes £4,082 as the cost of the Addington engine in precisely the same condition as the contractors' engine is delivered?—That is so.

37. What is the price of the contractors' engine?—£3,998.

38. That makes a difference of £84 in favour of the contractors' engine?—That is so. I would like to say here that we do a large amount of work for the contract locomotives. We do the whole of the wheels and axles, and fit the crank-pins, which is a pretty large job, and for which we charge practically the net cost. We make nothing out of the amount charged to the contractor for these wheels and axles. In addition to the wheels and axles we supply all the bronze castings, we make all the lamps, we make all the bearing-springs, and we supply numerous forgings.

39. Has it happened that you have to take gear off engines at Addington in order to keep the contractor supplied?—Yes. In connection with the three locomotives that have been brought under discussion, the wheels and axles that were already prepared—and, speaking from memory, I believe one set was really under the engine—they all had to be sent to the Thames because the material ordered by Price Bros. had not arrived. I may also say that, from the time the first lot of wheels and axles were supplied to Price's, we were almost every week urged to keep on sending them stuff, and this had to be done to the detriment of our own work. Frequently gear had to be taken out of machines in order to enable us to push on with the work for Price Bros.

40. From time to time, as similar work is done at Hillside and Addington, you, I presume, prepare costs in detail?—That is so.

41. Do you find that either of these two shops is always ahead of the other, or does it vary?—It varies. In some cases Hillside does the work cheaper than Addington, and the reverse is the case at other times.

42. Do you consider the points-and-crossings shop a thoroughly efficient shop?—Yes, I think it is really the most up-to-date shop we have.

43. Is it within your knowledge that the price at which you can manufacture points and crossings at Addington at a profit is a lower price than that of tenders from outside firms which have been received in recent times?—I know that some months ago tenders were called for 100 sets of points and crossings. We were extremely busy, but the prices were so very much higher than ours that no tender was accepted. The lowest tender, so far as I remember, with the rails supplied, was at a much higher rate than ours, including rails and labour.

44. Therefore, although we were pressed for points and crossings at that particular time, it was considered desirable to make them ourselves rather than pay the enhanced price outside?—That is so.

45. Do you consider that the changing of the staff from new to old work is a handicap?—Undoubtedly.

46. In other words, it is a handicap to have to do both new manufactures and repair-work in the same workshop?—In my opinion it is a great handicap.

47. Can you state the organization at Addington?—Under myself there is the Workshops Manager, seven foremen—one in charge of each branch, a foreman blacksmith, a foreman boilermaker, a foreman carpenter, a foreman painter, a foreman moulder, a foreman fitter, and a foreman in charge of the new locomotive works and the points and crossings. Under these foremen there are numbers of leading hands. As the work increases, leading hands are appointed wherever it is considered necessary.

48. What is your opinion with regard to the efficiency of the plant and appliances?—We have some very fine machines at Addington, but we are undoubtedly deficient in some respects. For instance, our lifting-gear is certainly not up to date, and in my opinion our power appliances are also behind the times. Representations have been made on more than one occasion in both these directions, but I have always understood that it has been a question of money. Some eighteen months ago strong representations were made about remodelling the machine-shop, but up to the present nothing has been done in the matter.

49. What is your idea with regard to an improvement in the lifting appliances?—I think electric cranes would be found most suitable. If electric power was installed to drive the machinery and the cranes a very large saving would be effected. There is no doubt that many of those old boilers we use burn a tremendous amount of coal, and a very large saving could be effected by doing away with them altogether.

50. So far as your knowledge goes, do you think the system of work adopted at Addington is satisfactory?—I think the system of distributing and laying out the work, and so on, is satisfactory. That is, of course, under the control of the Workshops Manager.

51. In the case of a pressure of work, would you recommend an increase in the number of men and the amount of machinery, or would you be in favour of running the existing machinery on an extra shift temporarily?—If the increase in work is only of a very temporary nature it would not be economical to purchase a large amount of machinery just for that short time; but where the work is obviously steadily increasing, and more machinery is wanted, I think it would be far better to provide it than to