

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

INVERCARGILL, THURSDAY, 25TH MARCH, 1909.

The first meeting of the Commission was held in the Ministerial Room of the Post-office, Invercargill, on Thursday, the 25th March, 1909, at 10 a.m.

Present: The Hon. T. Y. Duncan, M.P. (in the chair), Messrs. J. A. Hanan, M.P., H. G. Ell, M.P., J. F. Arnold, M.P., J. Stallworthy, M.P., W. H. P. Barber, J. B. Leyland, S. I. Clarke, and W. Morris.

The Commission, dated the 9th day of March, 1909, was read from His Excellency the Governor, appointing the above gentlemen and Messrs. W. H. Field, M.P., W. T. Jennings, M.P., and F. Mander, M.P., to be Commissioners for the purpose of inquiring by all lawful means into the conditions affecting the timber and timber-building industries, including the matters specified in the Order of Reference.

The Chairman opened the proceedings by stating the object of the inquiry, and invited the views of members of the Commission as to the procedure to be adopted and the best manner of securing and taking evidence.

An informal discussion then took place, after which it was unanimously resolved:—

Hours of Meeting.

That the Commission would meet at 9.30 a.m., and be open for public business at 10 a.m., sitting until 1 p.m., when it would adjourn for an hour, resume at 2 p.m., and continue until 5.30 p.m., when it would adjourn for the day, unless circumstances rendered an evening sitting necessary.

Evidence.

That all evidence be taken on oath.

That a typewritten transcript of the reporters' shorthand verbatim notes be supplied to each member of the Commission as soon as possible after the taking of each day's notes.

That, as far as possible, each witness give evidence in the same order of subjects as is set forth in the Commission.

Proceedings to be Public.

That the proceedings of the Commission be open to the public and to the Press.

That when the Commission goes into committee the public and the Press be excluded.

Witnesses for Invercargill.

It was resolved, That the following persons, suggested by Mr. Hanan, be asked to attend and give evidence:—

W. H. Brent, president, Sawmillers' Association.

E. C. Leary, secretary, Sawmillers' Association.

H. A. Massey, sawmill, Esk Street, Invercargill.

E. R. Wilson, architect, Invercargill.

Hugh Mair, contractor, Liddel Street, Invercargill.

William Ashley, builder, Don Street, Invercargill.

James More, sawmill, Riverton.

Andrew Bain, chairman, Builders' Association, Georgetown.

F. L. Vickery, secretary, Builders' Association, Bowmont Street, Invercargill.

James Leggatt, sawmill, Ness Street, Invercargill.

Joseph Hensley, sawmill, Esk Street, Invercargill.

Jacob Alsweiler, president, Sawmill-workers' Union, Esk Street, Invercargill.

T. O'Byrne, secretary, Sawmill-workers' Union, Esk Street, Invercargill.

W. R. Riddell, c/o Smith's factory, Nith Street, Invercargill.

William Stead, c/o Stead and Dewar, furniture-maker, Tay Street, Invercargill.

Charles Lambert, Earn Street, Invercargill.

C. A. Piper, Traffic Manager, New Zealand Railways, Invercargill.

J. P. Ridings, Collector of Customs, Invercargill.

E. H. Wilmot, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Invercargill.

James Collins, Timber Expert, Lands Office, Invercargill.

And another witness to be selected, to give evidence as to prices, quantities, &c., of butter-boxes used in Southland.

Railway-sleepers.

It was also decided that the New Zealand Railways Department be requested to furnish information as to the varieties and quantities of timber used as railway-sleepers, the information to be ready by the time the Commission sits in Wellington.