

122. You remember the flood of 1907?—Yes.
123. You remember bad floods prior to that?—Yes.
124. Many?—Not a great many.
125. Floods as bad as the 1907 flood before 1907?—Yes.
126. *Mr. Moresby.*] Do you remember, in the 1907 flood, water coming over down at Nether-ton and down by Fisher's for quite a long time?—Yes.
127. Have you ever seen that before 1907?—No.
128. *Mr. Flatman.*] At what date previous to 1907 were the floods as bad as 1907?—It would be years before that. I was in Firth's boat at that time. It was the heaviest flood I had seen.
129. *The Chairman.*] That is, a higher flood in the river, but not over the whole countryside?—That is so.

THAMES, SATURDAY, 28TH MAY, 1910.

*Mr. Bruce* attended, and said he represented the Thames Borough Council, the Thames Harbour Board, and the Thames County Council, who had joined together to-day for the purposes of this inquiry. Therefore the evidence for the one would be the evidence for the other.

THOMAS COOK BAYLDON examined. (No. 41.)

1. *Mr. Bruce.*] You are Harbourmaster and pilot at the Port of Thames?—Yes.
2. And have been so for twenty-eight years?—Yes.
3. During late years has the bottom of the Thames Harbour and the bottom of the Thames River become harder or altered in any way?—Yes, it is harder than it used to be.
4. That would apply to the whole of the front shore, I presume, back from the Goods Wharf to Shortland?—Yes.
5. That undoubtedly has become very much harder?—Yes.
6. How far up do you mean when you refer to the Thames River?—As far as the Junction—that is what we understand by the "Thames River."
7. Referring to the portion of the river opposite the fairway buoy to the mouth of the river, up till lately what was the nature of the bottom there?—Very soft pug.
8. Vessels at certain portions of the tide would be able to plough through a foot or a couple of feet of that mud?—They could plough through for 2 ft.
9. A boat could have been brought in or out of the river through that mud?—Yes.
10. What would be the case now?—I do not think that would be the case now. I took a deep-draught vessel in a little while ago, and I found I had to back and fill her on the flats, where I knew I could have gone through before at the same state of the tide.
11. So far as the exact depth of the water is concerned, there is no appreciable difference during the last few years?—No.
12. But the bottom has become harder?—Yes.
13. Do you think any alteration in this is on account of the scour?—Yes; and I think in a great measure steamers going up and down assist it.
14. Take a vessel, for instance, like the barque "Selwyn Craig": if she had happened to ground a few years ago, what would have been the result—would she have settled in the mud?—Yes. I have seen a vessel like that settle in the mud to the covering-boards.
15. That is, lie in the mud to a depth of 6 ft. or 7 ft.?—Yes.
16. What would happen now if she stuck in the same place?—She would not sink to anything like that depth.
17. Would she sink to 3 ft.?—Yes, but not more than that.
18. *The Chairman.*] What do you mean by the "channel"?—The centre of the Thames River as buoyed out on our chart.
19. What is the width of the channel?—In places about a cable and a half; at other places it widens out considerably. At Opani Point it is not more than a cable wide now.
20. *Mr. Bruce.*] A couple of months ago you took some samples from the bottom and sides of the river from Turua downwards to the fairway buoy?—Yes.
21. The sample you took would amount in the aggregate to about four kerosene-tins full?—About that.
22. What would be the distance?—Seven miles.
23. Therefore the sample taken was a very, very small quantity of the whole?—It was difficult to get that, on account of the rush of water.
24. *The Chairman.*] How did you obtain the sample?—I made a spoon out of a stiff pitch-ladle, and I took it up on a pole as near low water as possible.
25. *Mr. Bruce.*] You handed these samples to me as Secretary of the Board?—Yes. [Exhibit No. 30.]
26. *The Chairman.*] Do I understand that all the samples were mixed together?—Yes; I could not do anything else.
27. And they settled, and this is the result?—Yes. Of course, I looked at the samples to see what the class of the ground was before I put them into the tin.
28. But there is no separate sample for each place?—No. The object was to see if I could trace any silt.
29. How many samples did you take in the seven miles?—I suppose, about fifty.
30. *Mr. Bruce.*] For some years you have noticed a bank forming on the right-hand side of the Thames Goods Wharf?—Yes.