

57. No; I had returned from the Old Country. I suggest to you that the offer of inducement that I made to you was with the object of assisting me to cut up Birchwood: is not that so?—That was the first time, was it?

58. I have never made you any offers excepting at one particular time in 1909?—We did not accept the offer simply because we did not know how we were going to get on.

59. Is it not a fact that the object I had in view in offering you assistance at all was to assist me in cutting up Birchwood?—I do not know.

60. In view of that, I asked you to come round by the White Hills, so that there would be a greater length of railway go through my property?—It was both ways: you put it in that way, and you put it in the other way too. We went up to the top of the Morley Hill, and you thought it would be all right—that we could get up there. Mr. McGregor was with you that time.

61. I asked you the question, “Will you come in if I give you this inducement?” and it was declined?—You gave an inducement in both ways.

62. I have admitted that; but that was the object I had in view—the cutting-up of Birchwood, because I had made financial arrangements at Home to enable me to do that?—Yes.

63. When Mr. Armstead asked you whether this railway of yours could take all the coal in that district, you said Yes, that it all fell down into your terminus?—That is the main coalfield right there, and that has been proved. Sutherland and Mosses sunk a shaft on the top of the hill there, and it is exactly the same coal that we are working now.

64. I suggest to you that the leases that have been granted by the Government would not be served by your railway, because they would have to haul the coal up from the Morley Valley on to the ridge, and put it down again on to your terminus—a distance in some cases of something like three miles and a half to four miles?—I said before that if we got inducement we would be quite willing to put the line on to that.

65. Your answer to the question was, Yes; it had all to fall down into your railway. I ask you, in view of what I have said, is that right or is it wrong?—I have not quite got a grasp of what you mean.

66. You know where the Linton Coal Company’s area is now?—Yes, I have an idea.

67. It is on the other side of the Morley Valley, over from Moss’s pit?—Yes.

68. The coal from that pit would have to be hauled up on to the ridge?—Yes; but it would have to be hauled there in any case.

69. I want to point out to you that the coal is not falling down on to your railway now—that it has got to be hauled up the hill and then pitched down again on to your railway?—Yes; it comes to our terminus now.

70. You have nothing in writing from me binding me to give you assistance?—Nothing whatever. It was a verbal promise.

71. For that time only, and that promise was declined?—That promise was withdrawn before we got a chance—before we got our line in.

72. When did you ask me not to withdraw the promise?—You did not say that you withdrew it.

73. The promise was made on the spur of the moment, and declined on the spur of the moment?—No.

*Mr. Robertson:* Had that promise a time-limit?

*Mr. Rodger:* No, there was no time-limit. It was not in writing. It was made while we were on the ground, and it was declined. The only offer I made was in writing, the letter being in the evidence.

74. *Mr. Rodger:* With regard to possible extension, you say, Mr. More, that it is possible to extend your railway satisfactorily from your present terminus to Ohai?—Where is Ohai?

75. Exactly on the right above Moss’s pit?—That is so.

*Mr. Rodger:* I wish to put in evidence to the contrary. The only surveyor who has actually surveyed the work is Mr. Leonard Webb, who did so on behalf of the Mossbank Coal Company, with the idea of extending the railway, or getting a connection to this particular point—Ohai—where their coal-mine is. He says, “I recently made a”

*The Chairman:* You are out of order now. You must question the witness, and you can put that document in afterwards.

76. *Mr. Rodger:* Very well. Mr. Armstead asked you whether your present terminus could be utilized for the extension of the railway to this point—Ohai—that we refer to. You say it can?—It would have to go off where it comes round to the screens.

77. As a matter of fact, there are from 20 to 25 chains of the present railway that are absolutely useless for extension purposes?—I do not think there would be that much.

78. I stepped it the other day?—I did not think it would be that far up to the screens.

79. The present terminus cannot be utilized at all for extension. There is a certain length of it, you admit, that would be useless for that purpose?—There would be about 20 chains. We had to turn round there to get in to the screens. That is the reason why we went up there.

80. You said that you, or the Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited), had no interest whatever in coal in that district until within about a month ago, when the Wairio Railway and Coal Company (Limited) took an area over?—That is so.

81. In November, 1912, you agreed to take over from Mr. Gavin Brighton Section 206, Wairio Survey District, did you not?—Yes.

82. With what object did you agree to purchase that section?—For one thing, the terminus of the railway goes up into it. We cut through it at the bottom end. We take an acre or two of the bottom end, and the screens go up into the other end; the screens and the buildings are erected there; and the right-of-way comes down through it.