

1892.

NEW ZEALAND.

ROLLING-STOCK ON NEW ZEALAND RAILWAYS.

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated 7th July, 1892.

Ordered, "That a return be laid before this House showing the total quantity of the several descriptions of rolling-stock on each section of the New Zealand railways at each of the following dates: viz., 1st January, 1889, and 30th June, 1892 such return to show the number of engines and vehicles on each section (a) actually in use for traffic, (b) in shops, undergoing repairs, and (c) unfit for use or obsolete; the total amount expended on rolling-stock (exclusive of repairs) during the period referred to the numbers and descriptions of engines and vehicles purchased or built; the vote or fund to which the cost of the same was charged, and the sections of railway on which they are in use: the return to also show the numbers and descriptions of all classes of rolling-stock and engines sold, broken up or used up, laid aside as obsolete or useless, or otherwise disposed of during the same period, the amount derived from the sale or disposal of the same, and the account, vote, or fund to which the proceeds of the sale or disposal of the same have been credited."—(Mr. SANDFORD.)

THE return cannot be rendered for the precise dates named, because accounts and stocktaking, &c., are finally dealt with at the end of each financial year, and cannot now be made up for other past dates. The return, therefore, has been made out for the financial years from 31st March, 1889 (when the Commissioners were in office, to 31st March, 1892, the date of the last balance.

The total cost of repairs and improvements on the locomotives and stock, shown in Part I. of this return, during the three years has been £340,126. All this expenditure has been charged against vote, "Working Railways Department," Schedule B, Consolidated Fund.

The total value of additional new stock put on the railways and in hand, provided out of loan, shown in Part II. of the return, was £18,214 13s. 6d.

PART I.

Particulars.	Section.									Totals.
	Kawakawa.	Whangarei.	Auckland.	Wellington and Napier- Taranaki.	Hurunui- Bluff.	Greymouth.	Westport.	Nelson.	Picton.	
<i>On 31st March, 1889</i>										
Total number of engines ..	3	3	36	73	139	5	6	4	3	272
Total number of vehicles	88	104	942	1,682	5,129	330	253	72	68	8,668
Number of engines and vehicles actually in use for traffic—										
Engines	1	1	15	31	75	2	3	2	1	131
Vehicles ..	87	103	921	1,605	4,980	315	248	72	67	8,398
Number of engines and vehicles in shops undergoing repairs—										
Engines	Nil	1	5	18	22	1	1	Nil	1	49
Vehicles	1	1	21	77	149	15	5	Nil	1	270
<i>On 31st March, 1892.</i>										
Total number of engines ..	3	2	32	71	139	5	6	4	3	265
Total number of vehicles	88	104	932	1,698	5,137	330	258	71	83	8,701
Number of engines and vehicles actually in use for traffic—										
Engines	1	1	16	31	77	2	3	2	1	134
Vehicles	84	104	883	1,629	5,001	322	255	71	79	8,428
Number of engines and vehicles in shops undergoing repairs—										
Engines ..	Nil	Nil	4	19	24	2	2	1	1	53
Vehicles	4	Nil	49	69	136	8	3	Nil	4	273

Number of Engines and Vehicles unfit for Use, or Obsolete, on 31st March, 1889, and 31st March, 1892 the Total Amount expended on Rolling-stock (exclusive of Repairs) during the Period referred to.

No stock is unfit for use other than what is in the shops for repair or renewal. Many of the engines, carriages, and wagons, although not obsolete, are of an unsuitable pattern, and have been undergoing replacement for some years. None are laid aside without being replaced. There is no means of ascertaining the amount expended on improvements of rolling-stock, apart from repairs and renewals. A wagon originally designed to carry 4 tons, requiring renewal, is converted into a more useful type which carries 6 tons, but it could not be stated how the cost of improvements and repairs should be relatively divided. The one hundred 5-ton wagons sold to the Western Australian Government were renewed by one hundred 6-ton wagons, giving an increased capacity of 20 per cent., but the value of the improvement was more than this, though it could not be stated apart from the value of renewals. In the same way, engines are rebuilt better suited to the conditions of traffic, giving greater aggregate power than those dispensed with, but the cost of improvements and renewals cannot be separated. Again, in dealing with carriage stock, the practice has been to convert the original 4- and 6-wheel carriages into bogie stock, by splicing or adding to. In every instance the seating-accommodation has been increased, and more convenient and substantial vehicles have taken the place of the old stock. The addition to the value and accommodation has been very large, but there is no means of defining separately the expenditure assignable to renewals and to additions or improvements.

PART II.

The Numbers and Descriptions of Engines and Vehicles purchased or built, the Vote or Fund to which the Cost of the Same was charged and the Sections of Railway on which they are in Use.

Description.	New Stock provided out of Loan from 31st March, 1889, to 31st March, 1892. This is in addition to that shown on Part I.		Section of Railway.
	Number, 31st March, 1892.		
	In Traffic.	On Hand and in Transit.	
Locomotive	1		Wellington. Hurunui-Bluff. Wellington and Napier-Taranaki. Westport.
Wagons	13	19	
"	9	39	
"	24	26	
	47	84	

Public Works Fund, £12,644 4s. 6d., Westport Harbour Board, £5,570 9s. total, £18,214 13s. 6d

The Numbers and Descriptions of all Classes of Rolling-stock and Engines sold, broken up or used up, laid aside as obsolete or useless or otherwise disposed of during the Same Period the amount derived from the Sale or Disposal of the Same and the Account, Vote, or Fund to which the Proceeds of the Sale or Disposal of the Same have been credited.

This return is not susceptible of any complete answer. Locomotives and other vehicles come in for repairs or renewals of every degree. These may be partially repaired, altered into new types, or portions may be used up to repair or rebuild other stock, or in some cases entirely new stock may be built, the old materials and parts may be sold along with other material, or may be put into other work sold outside the department, and there can be no possibility of tracing the exact value derived from the sale, disposal, or use of the same. All expenditures incurred in the shops are charged against the vote for Working Railways Department, Schedule B, Consolidated Fund Account, in the "Appropriation Act," and all recoveries, whether on account of materials, or work done, are credited to this vote in pursuance of the "Public Revenues Act."

JAMES MCKERROW,
J P MAXWELL,
W M HANNAY,
Railway Commissioners.

3rd August, 1892.

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to the NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS.

Public Works Department, Wellington, 10th August, 1892.

Re Rolling-stock on opened Lines (Mr Sandford's Return).

Memorandum for the Railway Commissioners.

ON the above return being presented a few days ago exception was taken to it on the ground that it does not give any information whatever as to the quantity of rolling-stock sold, and the amount realised from the same. A motion referring the return back for further information would have been passed had I not undertaken, on behalf of the Commissioners, that further information would be given.

Even if the minute particulars as regards *parts* of engines and vehicles, mentioned on page 5 of the return, which I understand the mover does not press for under the circumstances stated, cannot be given, the Commissioners can doubtless give information as to the number of engines and vehicles sold whole, and the amounts received therefor. For example, I may mention the recent sale to the Western Australian Government, and other sales which are within the knowledge of members of the House.

I shall therefore be glad if the Commissioners will kindly have as full information as possible given under this head accordingly and let me have the return back, with the view of its being laid on the table of the House again at an early date.

R. J. SEDDON,
Minister for Public Works.

The NEW ZEALAND RAILWAY COMMISSIONERS to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

15th August, 1892.

Rolling-stock on opened Lines Mr Sandford's Return).

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

THE Commissioners have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant informing them that upon this return being presented exception was taken to it, and they have to thank you for giving them an opportunity for further explanation, and for suggesting further particulars.

The Commissioners, on page 5 of the return, which has been sent back, had already explained why it is not possible to answer the intricate and extensive question quoted on the margin of the same page. The gentleman asking the question has fallen into a very common error which it is difficult for persons not intimately acquainted with this branch of railway work to fully appreciate. He has supposed that each vehicle has, as it were, an individual existence, passing from infancy to old age, and final disintegration. Such is not the rule—the rolling-stock for the most part is made up of component parts for the most part interchangeable, and having different durations of life. Much pains have been taken by the engineers for many years past to apply this order of things as widely as possible. Individual parts exchangeable are such as wheels, axles, tires, draw-gear hooks, chains, axle-boxes, brasses, pads, springs, sole-bars, and other parts—such parts may from time to time be in running-stock or out of it. As each individual component part is worn out and withdrawn from use, it may be utilised as material for other work, either within or without the railways, or be again utilised for rolling-stock. Old cast-iron and steel are often supplied to the contractors to make new work, old wrought-iron is worked up under the hammer and turned out as new work—old brasses are melted down in the brass-foundry, and furnish new ones. Old timber may be utilised for work or for fuel, and on many occasions such old materials are sold with other, or are sold in the shape of new work.

In order to explain the extent of operations in the Government workshops, the following is a statement of the rolling-stock turned out of the shops during the past three financial years. Much of this has passed through the shops more than once during that period. There will, in addition, be stock in transit through the shops on the 31st March, 1892. There will, besides this, have been other work performed in the shops for the railways, other Government departments, and the outside public:—Engines and vehicles turned out of the railway workshops during the financial years 1890, 1891 1892 Engines, 40, vehicles, 11,657

It will readily be understood from the foregoing that no direct or approximate reply is possible to the first part of the question shown on page 5 of the return, demanding 'the numbers and descriptions of all classes of rolling-stock and engines sold, broken up or used up, laid aside as obsolete or useless, or otherwise disposed of.

With reference to your suggestion that the Commissioners should state particulars of such wagons and engines as have been sold whole, as in the case of those sold to the Western Australian Government, the following table will, we hope, meet your wishes. In order to be quite clear on this point it should be understood that none of this stock was either wholly new or wholly old. The wagons sold to Western Australia, for example, comprised a great many new parts. The wagons sold to the Longburn, the Midland, and the Manawatu companies, and Nelsons, although they were specially built for the purchasers and were new stock, comprised old parts. The respective values of new and old work cannot be separated.

It will be understood also that, while the amount stated in the table below as "value" shows much value of new work and parts which had never before been in rolling-stock, it also omits a large amount of value of materials and parts asked for in the return which have passed into other work, sold and unsold, which there is no possibility of tracing. It will be understood from these remarks that, as explained in the return, it is impossible to answer the latter part of the return—namely to state "the amount derived from the sale or disposal thereof," and that the stock shown as sold does not necessarily bear any relation to the preceding tables of the return.

Table showing the Number of Engines and Vehicles sold whole, as asked for in your Letter of 10th August, accompanying the Return sent back.

Purchaser.	Description.	Value.
		£
Manawatu County Council	One locomotive, Class A	500
Gear Company	Two high-sided wagons	100
Nelson Brothers ..	Seven frozen-meat vans	1,750
Midland Railway Company	Ten low-sided wagons	800
Manawatu Railway Company	Twelve high-sided wagons	1 080
Stewart and Hunter	One locomotive, Class C	500
"	Two wagons	260
Longburn Company	Seven frozen-meat vans	1,750
Canterbury Meat Company ..	One locomotive, Class A	500
Manawatu Railway Company	Twenty high-sided wagons	1,800
Nelson Brothers	One locomotive, Class A	500
Hokonui Coal Company	" " "	500
Kaitangata Coal Company	One passenger-car and van	400
Nelson Brothers	One frozen-meat van	300
Sash and Door Company	One locomotive, Class A	500
Castlecliff Railway Company ..	One Price's car	100
"	" " wagon	50
"	" " car	100
John McLean and Son	One locomotive, Class C	720
Western Australian Government	Three locomotives, Class S	6,000
"	One hundred low-sided wagons	8,000
		26 210

The question may be asked, "Is this value sold in any way in diminution of the accommodation or value of the rolling-stock originally provided out of capital? The reply to this question is "No." The engine-power brake-power carrying-capacity of the wagon stock, and seating-capacity of the carriage stock, have all been increased from the railway vote during the three years named. The capital value of the stock has thus been increased, and not diminished.

The most complete information about the railways is given in the Commissioners' annual report. The value of the workshop cash recoveries, both for new and old work, parts and materials of all descriptions, rolling-stock or otherwise, is shown thereon. The amount for the three years was £56,600.

There is another feature in connection with such a question as has been asked which it is necessary to refer to. The work of the railways, and the transactions in connection with stock of all kinds, is continuous, and erroneous views are likely to be obtained by taking observations of particular periods. The labour of reconstructing, simplifying, and improving the rolling-stock was commenced under the previous management, some years before the Commissioners were appointed, and was going on upon a large scale when the Government Railways Act came into operation. The later transactions and improvements are mostly the result and outcome of the previous undertakings, and should be considered accordingly.

The Commissioners have gone into this question very exhaustively on account of the explanations which they gave in the return not having been accepted. They feel that this occurred because neither the question nor the explanation has been properly understood. It cannot be supposed that the Commissioners have any desire to withhold any information ordered by the House which it is in their power to give. To place particulars now given, in pursuance of your request, in the return would, in the Commissioners' opinions, be misleading and incorrect.

The last part of the portion of the question stated on the fifth sheet of the return—viz., "The account, vote, or fund to which the proceeds of the sale, or disposal of the same, have been credited," is answered on the fifth sheet of the return.

The Commissioners respectfully request that this explanation may be presented to Parliament, together with the original return.

JAMES MCKERROW,
J P MAXWELL,
W M. HANNAY,
Railway Commissioners.

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