

You know the nearest point of the railway-station is about one mile and a quarter on the Rangitikei Road?—Yes.

For the great bulk of the business you have to do, how will that affect the company's carrying charges?—We must increase them.

To what extent?—Quite 3s. per ton.

And in some instances it may be more, is that not so?—Of course it will be more. The proportion would be about 3s. per ton.

Where do you assume that the goods-shed from which you will have to carry your goods will be situated?—As far as I can understand it is to be situated on the right-hand side of Rangitikei Street, which is at the intersection of Boundary Road.

If the goods-shed is on any other place in Boundary Road will it increase or decrease the distance?—If the distance is much longer it will be much more.

You are quite satisfied that the general bulk of your carrying will involve an increase of about 3s. per ton?—Yes.

And the public will have to pay for that?—Yes.

And the consumer will have to pay for it sooner or later?—Yes.

And that will have a general effect on your business?—Yes.

How long have you resided in Palmerston North?—For twenty-five years.

What is your opinion of the effect if the railway-station is removed on land-values in Palmerston North?—That is difficult to say. Of course, it will naturally increase the property near the railway, because firms will go there to get their business premises close to the railway, but to what extent I do not know.

In your opinion how will it affect land on the east side of the Square?—It all depends on the purpose for which the land will be utilized.

Will it improve the value of the eastern side of the Square for shop purposes?—Not for some time.

Will it affect it in the meantime?—Yes, to some extent.

What effect will it have in the meantime?—It will have the effect that its interest is taken away.

*Mr. Myers.*] I think you agree that there is a great deal of delay and inconvenience at the present time in the delivery of goods from the railway-station?—Yes, there is no doubt about that.

You have from time to time made serious complaints to the Railway Department?—Yes.

Both with regard to the inconvenience and delay?—Yes.

I suppose you take into account the inconvenience and delay?—We have not, unfortunately.

You have not really?—No.

You are a unique firm?—We cannot do it.

I suppose you would be glad to have better facilities?—Yes.

The goods-shed is some distance farther away than the passenger-station, is it not?—I suppose the distance from the Square is about half a mile.

Will you please tell me what you charge per ton from the goods-shed to, say, the Commercial Hotel?—5s. per ton.

What is the charge from the goods-shed to Holben and Kirk's premises?—6d. for every half-mile additional.

How then do you justify your statement that it would cost at least 3s. per ton more for carriage from the proposed station if it is only 6d. per ton per half-mile extra on your 5s.?—The distance is quite a mile and a half to where the proposed station will be. We would not base it on that price. When you come to take into consideration that the carts will have to run a mile and a half as against a mile, you have to run nearly three miles to get a load. Most of the carts are going back empty.

May I point out to you that better facilities will be provided at the new station?—Yes, I hope so.

You will have less inconvenience and no delays?—I have worked it out, and personally I think that it would cost 3s. extra from that point into the Square.

That is at 6d. per ton per half-mile?—That is the present rate. The charges may come down.

I think you have complained of the inconvenience and delay in connection with the delivery of goods at the station: it is a fact, is it not, that the Carriers' Association in Palmerston North waited on the Chamber of Commerce lately asking the Chamber to agitate for better facilities?—Yes.

What is it you do want?—The position in regard to the present station is this: if we send to the station we wait until the goods are ready for delivery. If we do not do that we would be losing a considerable amount of time—that is to say, we have to give the Railway Department a longer period for delivery than would be the case in the ordinary course.

That is because of the congestion?—Yes.

The position in Palmerston North is very serious, is it not?—Yes, it is very serious.

If the Railway authorities say that it is impossible under any reasonable conditions to improve matters at the present station, and that the only thing to do is to make this deviation, what is it you want—do you want both or do you want to leave things as they are?—I am for either way. In the business I represent it will not affect us.

I am submitting to you two alternatives, and they are, either leave things as they are or have the deviation: which is preferable?—As I have informed you already it will not affect us in the slightest. It will affect those who are in business.

I am not thinking only of the Express Company, and I do not want the Express Company to think of itself: I am asking you to think from the public point of view. Which is preferable of the two alternatives?—The public at the present time are suffering through the delay in getting delivery of goods.