

Confidential

Mesopotamia Commission

Tuesday 26th September 1916

Eighth Day

Members Present

The Right Hon: Lord George Francis Hamilton, G.C.S.I.
in the Chair

The R^t Hon: the Earl of Donoughmore, K.P.
General the R^t Hon: Sir Neville Gerald Lytton G.C.B., G.C.V.O.

Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge, G.C.B.

Lord Hugh Cecil M.P.

Sir Archibald Williamson, Bart, M.P.

Mr John Hodge M.P.

Commander Josiah C Wedgwood M.P.

Mr R. G. Duff, Secretary

Wynne 3 Inell

Captain George Lloyd M.P. sworn

3513

Chairman Captain Lloyd, you were employed between April and September December under Sir Percy Cox in Mesopotamia ⁱⁿ a semi military and political capacity [See back]

A That is so

3515

2 You went out as ^{were able to speak} you had been taught the language and had given a good deal of study to political questions which ^{may} arise or which may develop in that locality

A Yes

3516

2 We have taken evidence with regard to the inception of the Campaign. We are now mainly concerned as regards the medical and transport conditions.

45-44

Where

3514

2. We will take your written statement as your evidence in chief
a certainly.

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~~40 Wilton Crescent,~~

~~S.W. 20th Sept. 1916.~~

Sir,

In reply to your Summons to give evidence before the Mesopotamian Commission and to your query as to what subjects I am competent to give evidence upon in connection with the Mesopotamian Campaign, I beg to reply that I was employed between April and July last on special service under Sir Percy Cox in a semi-military and semi-political capacity. The fall of Kut having altered the particular work for which my services had been requested, I was occupied chiefly on political and on economic enquiries, partly relating to the present and partly to the future conditions of the occupied territories. In the course of these enquiries I was chiefly in Basra, but I made one journey up the Karun River to Adwaz, one journey to Bushire, and one to Amara. I shall therefore be in a position to give you my views as regards:-

1. Harbour, lighterage and tonnage facilities at the port of Basra. Building and Piers, wharfage facilities for ocean transport as far as Kurna &c. I should not be able to quote accurate statistics on these points, but could give you my views as to what could or could not be done, based upon my own pre-war experience of the port, and the views of British traders and merchants well acquainted with the locality.

2. Conditions of river transport between Basra and Amara, and accommodation for men and material on this journey during the height of the hot weather.

3^A
4^A
3514
2.
a

3. Views on the general question of communication necessities. The comparative value of steamer and railway transport, and the desirability of immediate amelioration of these questions.

4. My views regarding main causes of sickness and its treatment in the Hospitals.

5. Conditions of transport of Indian Troops between Busra and India.

6. Condition of Turkish prisoner camps.

In addition to these subjects I shall be able to give evidence if so desired on the civil administration of the occupied territories, our relations with Arab tribes, revenue, judicial, and other matters.

Yours truly,

(sgd) George Lloyd.

The Secretary,

Mesopotamian Commission,

28 Abingdon Street,

Westminster.

Where ^{were} you ~~to~~ chiefly when you were in Mesopotamia

I was chiefly at Basra. I was moved to ~~to Amara~~ and I was also sent up to the Dakkari country on one occasion with Sir Percy Cox; that is on the Kuram River

3517

2 You had an opportunity of seeing what the harbours ~~the port of~~ accommodation and unloading facilities were at Basra

I yes, but I could not speak ~~definitely~~ ^{statistically} about it. I knew the ~~port~~ ^{Port} some years ago and had to make an economic report on it then and I naturally could appreciate such ~~difficulties~~ ^{differences} as there were when I ~~arrived~~ ^{was it when} there the second time ^{before}

3518

2 How long ago ^{was it when} were you ^{there first}; ~~was that~~ a ~~nine~~ ^{nine} ~~three~~ ^{three} years ago

3519

2 When you were at Basra we had been in occupation for about 16 months or ~~something~~ ^{rather} more. ~~than that I should think~~

3

3520

1 Rather more than that I should think

2 Was there a marked improvement in the harbours accommodation and the wharfage

No I do not think there was. There was much greater activity consequent on the War. That is the first thing one noticed ~~as regards~~ ^{regards} laundry stages and such things as you might expect to be provided during a campaign of any duration, they were very remarkably absent I thought. That was my first impression

3521

2 ~~While~~ ^{while} you remained ~~there~~ ^{where} ~~did~~ ^{was} anything ~~done to improve~~ ^{done to improve} ~~the harbours~~ ^{in that respect} or ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~which would~~ ^{that direction} any ~~had~~ ^{had} no attempt ~~made~~ ^{made} in it

a There seemed to be very little done as regards laundry stages and provision of facilities for the

ships. the discharge of ~~goods~~ ^{ships}. While I was there ships began to unload. I do not know how long they had been unloading, up above Basra, at Magill, a most ^{important} Depot for Basra for the discharge of goods. For a long time previously to that I understand ~~ships~~ ^{ships} were not taken alongside at all and I think that ~~from~~ ^{a very} elementary study of the conditions of the port would be made it obvious for a long time before that it was very possible to bring ships alongside for at any rate many months in the year and discharge them direct on to the banks instead of ^{into} native craft, mahailas, which involves a good deal more labour and loss of time

3522

Q They ~~at~~ unload in the middle of the stream? & when I was there ~~no~~ ^{one} ship could go alongside and possibly two at Magill at a time, but for a long time previously I understand ships had merely discharged into native craft, mahailas, in mid stream or as close as they could be brought to the shore ^{so that} the goods were twice handled. ~~and brought on land~~. A good deal of the supply is still discharged in that ~~matter~~ manner

3523

Q You were working under Sir Percy Cox
A Yes

3524

Q Who had nothing whatever to do with that

A I am telling you my personal observations ^{in my private} ~~in my private~~ ^{political} capacity

3525

Q Did you ever discuss with any engineer the difficulties that there would be ^{in the way of} increasing the wharfage

A I discussed with a great many people, junior engineers, officers, and others, ~~as to~~ ^{as to} what could be done. I think ^{that} everybody ^{I met} agreed that

a great deal more could be done and should be done and in fact must be done

2 During the time that you were there had ~~the~~ disembarkation ^{or the} embarkation of ships been much accelerated

A I should think a good deal. One of the main difficulties ^{was} being solved - The organization of the port ^{had been} put under ~~the~~ Civil Authority ^{under whom}

3527

Commander Wedgwood I think his name was Brown ^{one of the} men ^{British} India men from Rangoon

3528

The Earl of Donoughmore. Sent out by the Admiralty?

A Yes ^{I think so} ~~it was~~ father has ^{but} found the conditions not very good, and he being a very experienced man took over the handling of the steamers, ^{arranging for} ~~arrangements~~ their entry to the port, ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{and their} ~~means~~ discharged in a more competent manner than had been done previously

3529

Gen. Sir Neville B. Helton ^{particular} Did you come across as well as Sir George Buchanan?

A Yes. The ^{particular} ~~doctor~~ worked that I am alluding to did not come directly under Sir George Buchanan. I think his main duties were to look after the river to see what could be done with regard to the rise and fall

3530

Chauhan When you were at Basra was the whole control of affairs in the hands of the military? Were they all military officers employed there

A Not quite all, Mr Brown was an exception but the whole thing was under ~~the~~ military authority

3531

Sir Archibald Williamson Where is Mr Brown
A I could not say. He was there the whole time I was there as far as I know. I do not think he had been there very

3532 Chairman When I arrived in April
 I There must have been many but they had probably
 been incorporated into the Army and had taken
 Commissions. I did not see any actually
 as such. ~~As~~ Public Works Department men

3533 2 ~~actually as such~~ Not in charge of departments?
 A No; ~~but~~ a great many ^{may} ~~could~~ have come in ^{from} under
 the Indian Army Reserve and taken Commissions

3534 Chairman They generally came in the capacity
 of purely military officers
 A Every one with one or two notable exceptions,
 came in under Army administration and as officers
 2 and they only had the functions of their
 military rank

3535 A They only had the functions of their military rank.
 A point I want to make in the great congestion
 There was at all times ^{in respect to} ~~for~~ unloading. Great waste
 of tonnage was going on all the time I was
 there. A very large number of steamers were
 lying in the stream whose discharge was quite
 impossible showing ~~to~~ a ~~the~~ lack of organization
 at the Indian end or the Basra end, or both.
 Five or six ships arrived at very short periods
 close to one another with no possibility of
 discharge for weeks. The ships would arrive
 and would be kept waiting in the river
 useless for any other purpose when, with better
 organization their arrival could have been
 delayed and they could have made other trips.
 I was given to understand in one case
 I cannot vouch for the accuracy of it -

5. that there were 40,000 tons of goods lying in the harbour in ships & bottoms, whilst at the moment I was told that the monthly discharged capacity of the harbour was something round about 30,000 tons. I cannot vouch for the correctness of the figure but at any rate it was something of the kind. That would show the delay ^{which} ~~existed~~ ^{existed}

3536 Q It ~~was~~ ^{would take} ~~one~~ a month to unload the ^{ships} ~~ships~~ that were there

A Probably
3537 Commander Wedgwood Five weeks

Q Yes
3538 Chairman ^{were} the stores ~~ought to be~~ ^{when} landed, ~~where they~~ properly protected?

A I cannot say that with regard to ^{Magill} ~~the~~. I was very little up there but at Basra I should say they were fairly

3539 Q Were there any difficulties about getting proper labour for unloading

A The labour difficulty has been very great all through ^{that is to say} ~~I say~~ there is never sufficient labour ^{and} ~~at~~ labour prices for ^{trabs} ~~trabs~~ are rising.

3540 Q It is suggested by one witness that the remuneration given was inadequate. Did you hear that suggested

A No, I should have said the remuneration given to ~~that~~ labour was very high indeed; certainly immensely greater than any there ever had been previously, and as regards the price it was quite sufficient to ^{attract} ~~attract~~ trabs from all round if it had been properly organised

3541 Lord Hugh Cecil Is there a large population to draw on for the purposes of labour

a very much larger population than you would think ^{Previously} ~~Obviously~~ when other works were undertaken ^{further north} in William Wilson's works, the same question was put to me and I said I believed ^{not} you could draw on fairly big reserves of labour. That was afterwards found to be the case, and whilst there ^{were} ~~were~~ not any very large villages, you attracted a much greater population than you had any reasons ^{statistically or geographically} to expect

3542

Quarman What is the population of Basra ^{in times} ~~and normal~~ ^{proper} ~~times~~
I have forgotten. There have never been any ^{proper} statistics. ~~The~~ Turkish ^{census} returns ^{are} ~~were~~ hopelessly inadequate

3543

I It is a big place
It is a bigish place

3544

I ~~What~~ ^{are the} are the buildings good buildings
I They ^{are the} same kind of buildings that you have in that part of the world. They are pretty solidly ~~made~~ ^{made} buildings. It depends on your standards

3545

I You are prepared ^{to give us} ~~know~~ your views as to what you ^{consider} ~~say~~ ^{or should} ~~be~~ done. ^{Do you} ~~Do you~~ ^{think} ~~would~~ ^{make} ~~you~~ ^{would} ~~make~~ a general statement ^{on this part of your evidence} ~~on this part of your~~ ^{or do you wish to} ~~would you~~ ^{make} a general statement
a I would like to say that I think a great deal more could be done as regards the provision of landing stages at Margill. I think that as regards Kurna, ^{the junction} ~~there is~~ a point between the Euphrates and the Tigris, - the possibility of Kurna as a ^{base} ~~base~~ ^{to which} ~~to which~~ ocean going steamers able to cross the bar could go direct without any discharge into river steamers, should be immediately ^{fully} ~~promptly~~ examined. I think there is a great deal of evidence to show ~~and~~ I think it is certain that for most of the year at any rate vessels of a considerable size coming direct from India or elsewhere could take goods straight up to Kurna

without discharging them at Basra and without putting them into river steamers. Very probably landing stages could be built at Kurnaff to enable the discharge of goods from ocean going vessels direct to Kurnaff. The advantage of that it is unnecessary to point out I think

6

3546

Lord Stagh Ceal We have heard that ocean going vessels can go up to Kurnaff
Q Yes, ^{they do} occasionally but very rarely. As far as my observation goes ^{practicality} ~~very little~~ ^{is} no use is made of Kurnaff as a depot base

3547

Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge Is Kurnaff a large place
A No there is nothing practically there - a few mud houses

3548

Chairman Are the banks steep
A No they are not steep; You would have to build out I imagine. I have not sufficient engineering capacity to say, but it is a point to which you should and could bring ocean going steamers of a certain size

3549

Commander Wedgwood You would ~~save~~ ^{save} 50 miles of rail and a big bridge across the Euphrates
A You would save discharging at Basra and relieve congestion, and ^{as required} ~~have~~ goods destined entirely up the Tigris you could discharge ^{them} direct into the railway proposed to be built there without breaking bulk or man handling them twice or three times

3550

Chairman You were working with Sir Percy Cox
A Yes

3551

Q It may not be quite a fair question to put but what does what you have stated represent the policy of the Department of which he was the head
A I would not like to say that at all. Sir Percy Cox had nothing whatever to do with those questions.

He is really the Civil ^{Governor} Engineer occupied in setting up the Civil Judicial and Revenue Administrations as between the fronts and the occupied territories I know his views quite well but it would be most improper to quote them because he never gave them to me officially

3552

2 Your next point is "Conditions of river transport between Basra and Amara and accommodations for men and material on this journey during the height of the hot weather"

If I may I would like to make one other point on the first question and that is ~~the~~ ^{the necessity} of having light railways along the shores of the river ~~between~~ ^{between} Margill and Usha - between ~~Usha~~ ^{Magill} and the large military camp at Makina

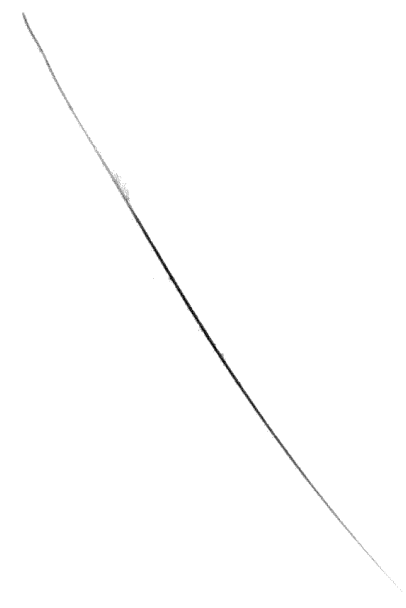
3553

2 That would be on the ~~right~~ ^{left} bank side On the right bank of the river - the bank on which Basra stands

3554

2 Basra is on the right bank is it
A Basra is on the right bank. It is on the western bank - ~~the right bank~~

Crabbe



I Lu

Y

3555

2 In your judgment are there exceptional difficulties in making ^a railway

a. No.

3556

2 Not even in times of flood

a. No, not there

3557

2. It would run up how far.

a It would run up four miles to ~~Magill~~ ^{Nakina} and would run ^{desirable} where ~~it was thought~~ down the bank to Usha - chiefly between the military camp at ~~Magill~~ ^{Nakina} and the various points between ~~Magill~~ and Usha.

3558

Commander Wedgwood: You mean a light railway of 2 feet 6 gauge

a. The ^{simplest} ~~simplest~~ mechanical thing you can provide ~~is~~ ^{as} a ^{tram} ~~tram~~ to relieve mule transport, assist in the movement of troops and avoid the four mile ^{fairly} ~~very~~ marches between ~~Magill~~ ^{Nakina} and ~~Magill~~ ^{Magill} ^{in the} ~~in the~~ ^{great heat or in the} ~~winter or wet~~ ^{which the troops have to do; and generally} ~~generally~~ ^{you should put down whatever you consider} ~~elementary~~ ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{generally} ~~generally~~ ^{required under elementary civilized conditions in any campaign.}

3559

Lord Hugh Cecil: How far is ~~Magill~~ ^{Nakina} from ~~Magill~~

a Four and a half to five miles I should say. It is a considerable hardship to men marching ~~about~~ with heavy kit ~~going~~ to embark up river. It is slow and involves a great deal of mule transport. A great deal of the difficulty would be removed by light railways properly run.

3560

Chairman: Had any commencement of such a railway been made.

a I saw nothing

3561

2 ~~were~~ ^{were not} they commencing to build a railway when you left?

a Not as regards the port of Basra; as regards other railways they were being made. At present the main ^{river}

3562

2 transport ~~is~~ ^{is} between ~~Basra~~ ^{Basra} and ~~Amara~~ ^{Amara} ^{is} by sailing boats?

a River steamers

3563
 2 Were they sufficient for ~~carrying~~ the bulk of the transport
 a (Certainly not I should think. I put that point in because
 I have seen a great deal of criticism as regards the
 conditions for troops going up river, and knowing
 the country very well I thought it worth while to state
~~what I said~~ ^{my views}. I want to preface these remarks which refer
 to General M^r Munn's administration ~~by those~~ by
 saying that I think it is only due ^{to him} to say
 that he has done ^{perfectly amazingly} ~~eminent~~ good work. He has not been
 there very long ~~but~~ I think he has had a heritage of
~~with~~ immense difficulties with which he is grappling very
 Successfully

3564 2 What is he
 a I.G.C.

3565 Commander Wedgwood: He succeeded Davidson
^{of} Lord Hugh Cecil: when was he appointed

a I cannot say exactly but I should think some
 time in the Spring of this year. In any criticism
 I make of the conditions there I do not think they
~~defects~~ are due to him. He has done I think everything
 that anybody could and most brilliantly ^{grappled} to cope
 with the ~~circumstances~~ situation so far. What
 I say refers back to previous times

3566 2 are his powers confined to ^{the} moving ^{of} goods or has he
 means of improving communications

a It's responsibilities, as I understand ^{and} (I am not ~~a~~
^{to speak} qualified ~~military officer~~ with regard to that), refer
 to all the lines of communication - ~~the movement~~
 of transport, ^{the movement of} troops, goods - all along as far as I
 know. He works in conjunction with Supply and
 transport, ~~and others~~ when ~~the~~ Supply
 and transport wish to get goods to a certain point
 the carriage of the goods comes under the I.G.C.'s

department and the carriage of ^{the supply and transport} men. They have to go to the I. G. C. to get them there

Chairman: I am sorry that we interrupted you
 & perhaps I may give my own experience briefly. I travelled by a river steamer as an ordinary officer, not on the staff, from Nagall to Amara. There were on board 200 Turkish prisoners, and a small party of civilians, Turkish women and children - children of ^{Turkish} men and women anyway. There were some British details in one ~~party~~ barge and the other barge was full of mules. I found myself officiously ^{commanding} the troops going up river at the last moment without any warning, which I think might have been given by the ~~military~~ ^{land} officer concerned. I ~~noticed~~ ^{noticed - to} put it very briefly, very bad organization as regards the papers, which I think accounts for a great deal of the muddles going on up river. I examined ~~the~~ ^{papers} the only ~~things~~ ^{papers} which were handed to me and ^{speaking purely} from a business point of view, I cannot imagine any transport succeeding under the conditions prevailing. I looked at the way bill on which should be inserted ^{cried} not only all the troops, the names of the officers and the amount of cargo, but their destinations. I saw no possible indication as to where they were going ~~and~~ ^{the} and I found that largely ^{the} destinations were omitted. It was therefore impossible for me, although I was responsible for it, to know where mules, ~~guns~~ ^{men} or Turkish prisoners should be deposited.

Chairman: You stopped at intermediate stations, I suppose ^{several}.
 a ~~They said~~ It was my duty to see that the goods and the men were discharged at the right places,

but it

It was not possible for me to do it. There was nobody on board the steamer to whom I could appeal, and I put that out as one small matter of organization which I know, as a matter of fact, accounts for a good deal of the muddles which certainly occurred. I was ~~was~~ asked almost immediately I woke in the morning in ^{the} great heat ^{by} a young officer to assist him with 200 Turkish prisoners who were crowding round him and who obviously wanted something. ^{He did not know what to do with them.} He could not speak Turkish nor had he any reason to suppose that I could. There was only one other Turkish speaking officer, speaking under correction, in Mesopotamia at all during the time. It was merely a chance that I spoke Turkish. ^{This young officer} He had been sent on board with approximately 200 Turkish prisoners without any interpreter and it was impossible for him to cope with them at all. They required food. No arrangements that I could discover, at any rate ^{no} ~~inadequate~~ arrangements had been made for the rationing of this party of 200 prisoners. After great labors, which I will not dwell upon ^{now} we found food for them. The supply and transport had failed to show the officer where the food was. It was put in a most improper place I think, and ~~there were~~ no arrangements or facilities of any kind for cooking were made. Nothing had been done. The men were ~~flung~~ ^{flung} on board anyhow and the food ^{was flung} ~~flung~~ on board separately. ^{involved} and there was a great deal of labor, ^{incurred} and a certain amount of ill feeling ^{incurred} for a few moments among the Turks ~~incurred~~. I think the supply and transport ~~and~~ ^{need} ~~and~~ ^{capt}

~~Some good~~
~~available of great~~ improvement as regards organization;

in fact a great deal of improvement

where ^{misappreciated} I were they ~~ever~~ being sent to

~~going up for exchange~~

a They were going up for exchange

3570 I was there any particular pressure or were the conditions more or less normal

a The pressure on the river Steamers was always great I should say

3571 I were there any military operations going on

a No; after Kut, during the whole time I was there, there was practically nothing going on at all

3572 I there was no emergency to account for hasty and imperfect arrangements

a No ^{except that} Fever was so bad in Basra whilst I was there that ~~on~~ the staff were being very much depleted and I know that offices were constantly without

clerks, or ^{had} a very very small supply, and certainly under ^{the} very bad weather conditions ^{The condition of things}

^{it} was difficult to carry on. ^{It} tracks unfavourable on Staff work as it ^{it} does on regimental work.

It is very bad for all. I think that improvement could be made

3573 Commander Wedgwood: were these able-bodied prisoners ^{who were} being exchanged for our wounded

a I cannot say for ^{whom} ~~I do not know~~ that they were being exchanged. I make the point that I think

that the staff work as regards Supply and Transport and Communications ~~could be made~~

improved and a great many of the difficulties are due to the lack of supervision ^{small} of detail which could be remedied. On the river steamer for

instance there was a kind of carelessness which ^{it} I think is bad. The heat was terrific. It is very

hard to visualise the conditions when people do

not know the country. The steamer had only a single awning ^{and} there were cases of heat-stroke. The captain was asked about it and he said that he had applied for a double awning ~~for~~ weeks and weeks ^{ago} but ^{but} nothing had been done. That is one case I know. A thing like that ought not to happen. It is easy to ~~keep~~ ^{provide} a double awning on the boat. ~~the~~ ^{on what boat} ~~the~~ Mejidagh I think it is called

3574 Chairman: Who was in charge of the transport and supply department

a I cannot tell you

3575 2 It rested with them to supply the awning

a I think so but I am not quite sure. As far as ~~any~~ ^{abs} ~~the~~ ^{Certainly} the conditions ~~which~~ for the troops going up river in the hot weather ~~and~~ ^{or} down ~~are~~ ^{we} very bad

3576 Commander Wedgwood: unnecessarily bad

x a I think unnecessarily bad

3577 General Sir Neville Lyttelton: When was this

a I went up to Amara sometime back, in June, I think

3578 Lord Hugh Cecil: Was there ice available

a a little ice was available. There is always a great shortage of ice there of course

3579 Chairman: On the steamers?

a On the steamers. ^{The} a medical officer on board was himself ill. He ~~did~~ ^{did} all he could ^{with the} heat stroke cases. ^{at well} when the water is any temperature you ^{like} you cannot get quick remedies

3580 Lord Hugh Cecil: Was there adequate ice for the treatment of people who had heat stroke.

a There was a little ice on board. I did not see it used. I do not think there is anything to be said about that. Ice was there.

10

3581

Chairman Does a medical officer go on board
 a A medical officer goes on board the "Mejidieh". I
 do not know if there is one on every boat

3582

Sir Archibald Williamson: Had Cook's boats arrived
 from the Nile?

a I think so. I am pretty sure I saw a good many
 of them in Cairo before I left.

3583

2 Were they successful

a No they were not very good steamers I should
 think

3584

Chairman: The third point in your statement is:

"Views on the general question of communication
 necessities. The comparative value of steamer
 and railway transport, and the desirability
 of immediate amelioration of these questions"

a I have only to say what I think is pretty obvious
 to anybody - that it is my view that a railway
 should be built and probably two, and ^{one} ~~it~~
 ought to have been built very much earlier,
 or it should have been made very clear whether
 the difficulties in building a railway behind
 the troops up ~~to~~ the Tigris were too great to
 be overcome

3585

Lord Hugh Cecil: Khirna ^{to} Amara and Basra ^{to} ^{sir} Nassiriyah

a Yes. There should have been a railway built in
 my judgment to follow the troops along
 as they went up the river. Lord
 Kitchener refused to depend, you ^{remembers} Simply on river
 transport in the Soudan campaign. I found it
 difficult to get reliable evidence as to how great
 the difficulties in building the Tigris railway
 would be. It seems obvious that no very definite
 decision or expert advice had been taken early
 as to whether ~~the~~ ^a railway could or could not
 be

7

be built. We know ^{that} there are great difficulties in ~~the~~ marsh country, but those of us who know the country believe that a light railway is perfectly feasible. A railway is obviously necessary for ~~an~~ ^{the} army in the field, and I beg that question may be cleared up.

3586

Commander Wedgwood: There is no difficulty in taking a railway to Kut up the Shat-el Nai, — the marshes do not affect that part.

a The floods would affect that part

3587

Sir Archibald Williamson: Can you ^{can} go back from the river so far as to get land free from marshes?

a Yes, but the marshes ~~are~~ ^{go} a considerable way in. A road has been built ^{on} with a bund or raised embankment for the whole way I think, or a considerable part of the way at any rate, between Kurna and Amara and it has stood the weather conditions very well. I cannot see why a line should not be made on the top of it.

3588 2 Sir Archibald Williamson Is the country ^{is} very different from the valley of the Nile in that respect

a Yes

3589 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: Would much bridging be required in crossing creeks

a Yes, a good deal of bridging would be required, and it has already been done in many areas — wooden trestle bridges

3590 2 Some of the creeks have bridges

a A great many. The road from Kurna to Amara is ^{bridged} ~~pretty~~ constantly ^{by} on trestle bridging

3591 Lord Dufferin: Does that road work fairly well.

a As far as I know, fairly well.

3592 2 Does it take motor traffic

11 / a I do not think so. It takes mule wagons, country carts and so on

3593 Chairman: were there many motor boats on the river when you were there

a A certain number of light launches. There was a great shortage of tugs

3594 2 were the launches provided by the Government or by private ~~associations~~ ^{effort.}

a I saw a few red-cross ~~craft~~ ^{ones} which I think had been given by private organizations. The main supply was entirely by the ~~Government~~ ^{Government}. I think I feel sure that all the ~~Army~~ ^{Army} ~~Commanders~~ ^{Commanders} of the various departments who had launches must have been supplied by the Government

3595 Lord Hugh Cecil: Did you hear anything of the conversion of ~~heavy craft~~ ^{red-cross launch}, motor boats or other transport to Government purposes.

a No, I heard nothing about it one way or the other. The railway question seems to me to be the ~~most~~ ^{and} most vital point now. If the communication question is cured, I believe it is fairly easily capable of being cured, almost all the difficulties that you have in the campaign will be immensely ~~improved~~ ^{lessened} if they do not entirely disappear. ^{The} ~~difficulties~~ ^{defects} in regard to sick transport, military power and effectiveness against the enemy, are all due in my judgment or mainly due to ^{inefficient} ~~defective~~ ^{organization} ~~organization~~

3596 Commander Wedgwood: That is not merely your own judgment but the view of ^{of the} the most important people out there

a It is the view of every sane person whom I met in a private capacity. I do not want to quote it officially

Print 3 Small

3597 Sir Archibald Williamson: What is being done
 a I cannot answer very clearly. ~~The Tigris river and~~ ^{the railway}
^{with regard to} ~~the~~ ^{railway matters were} ~~proceeding~~ ^{proceeding} at a very
 casual pace. ~~when I arrived~~ ^{when I left} I saw no signs of
 rapid advance or of immense energy

3598 2 Is that towards Nasiriyah
 a yes

3599 2 Shaiba being 18 miles away
 a yes

3600 Commander Wedgwood: Had they reached Shaiba then
 a no

3601 Lord Hugh Cecil: When did you ~~arrive~~ leave
 a. The end of ~~December~~ July.

3602 Sir Archibald Williamson: Was that being built with the
 German material on the spot

a I do not think so, but I could not speak positively

3603 Chairman: That ~~will~~ ^{would} not relieve the main line of transport
^{strategy and tactics}

a. no. As long as our ~~boundaries~~ ^{are the same and our}
 the main important railway must be the
 Tigris Railway

3604 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge: Would that railway which
 you speak of relieve the difficulties of the Hammur Lake
 a. The Euphrates Railway?

3605 2 Yes
 a. I could not speak positively about that - I do not know

3606 Chairman: Is the communication between Kurna and
 Nasiriyah easier than on the Tigris

a. I did not go up. I cannot speak from experience. There
 is nothing like the same congestion. There was only a
 brigade at Nasiriyah when I was there, and I do
 not think there is much difficulty

3607 Lord Hugh Cecil The Euphrates Railway would not touch
 Kurna at all: it would go direct

a. It would not touch Basra. It skirts the marshes

3608 Chairman: That is not the railway which is most wanted
 A. No; the railway most urgently needed and upon which
 the remedy for ^{so many} defects in my judgment depends is the Lycis Railway
 that is the railway from Kurna to Kalaat Salih Amara
 and Es Sinn.

3609 Lord Hugh Cecil: Es Sinn ~~Sinn~~ is the present front
 A. Yes

3610 Chairman: Is the other railway begun? The Kurna Railway
 A. ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~beginning~~ ^{beginning} when I was there. I remember that I went
 up with an officer who was ^{beginning} ~~beginning~~ it

3611 Commander Hedgwood: What kind of do you mean by ^{beginning} ~~beginning~~ ^{commenced}
 were any rails laid

A. There was no sign from the ~~east~~ river bank of any
 railway anywhere, but I cannot say what there may
 have been at a further distance. I have ~~no~~ ^{no} knowledge
 of anything being done

3612 Sir Cyprian Bridge ^{administ} here they doing any bridging in the
Hammar Lake

A. I do not know. I am afraid I do not know anything
 about the conditions of the Hammar Lake

3613 Chairman In your view, and I suppose in the view of everybody
 this deficiency of transport has a very detrimental effect
 on the troops

A. Yes
 2. Has it affected their moral or spirits

A. I was not up at the front with the troops but I think there
 is no doubt that the moral of the troops suffered from the
 severe conditions

3615 2. Is there a feeling of isolation or desertion and that they
 are not being taken proper care of.

A. I think there is a considerable feeling that they are not
 being properly fed and that the conditions are unnecessarily
 bad. Those of us who were at the Dardanelles and who
 have ^{realised} ~~recognised~~ the difficulties there, know that the conditions
 in

in Mesopotamia ^{are} very much worse. The climate is very much worse. There were great difficulties in transport and supply at the Dardanelles, but they were overcome there in a very different way, ^{than those} the way in which they have been tackled in Mesopotamia

3616 General Sir Neville Lytton There was a very

^{sharp lines}
A very great difficulties in landing in bad weather under fire and so on. There is a long line of sea communication

3617 Chairman Have you any information with regard to the hospitals.

were you at the hospital at all

A. No I was not. With regard ^{point 4} to all ~~four~~ of the synopsis, I think that a great deal of the sickness is caused by troops who come out there not behaving properly, taking into account the conditions. I do not know if they are ~~at~~ lectured on the way out ^{when they} or the officers are lectured as to how troops should be handled in tropical countries and particularly in Mesopotamia. I saw sights in Basra in the main camps that would account for any amount of sickness - Troops were basking constantly when the sun was up, which would kill me or most people. ^{They} were about in ^{vests} ~~vests~~ in the daytime, and ^{picnics} ~~conditions~~ of that kind are bound to make men dangerously ill or affect their health at once. I thought the medical officers in charge of a unit should not allow their men to do these things or the conditions should have been explained very clearly to all ranks before they landed. ^{With regard to} Officers who are new to tropical climates it is very necessary to explain that exposure to the sun under certain conditions must ^{cause severe} ~~cause~~ illness, and anybody who behaved, as some of the troops were allowed to behave, basking in the sun and walking about insufficiently clothed, would certainly get ill

3618

Commander Wedgwood: Were they ^{all} wearing helmets at the time

A. Yes, but there was a good deal of lack of organisation.

3619

General Sir Neville Lyttelton. ^{was there} ^{with the gun.} ^{for instance} ^{Want of discipline}

A. I question whether ~~the~~ orders were given. Want of discipline is disobedience to ~~the~~ orders

3620

Commander Wedgwood These were drafts, ^{not} ~~not~~ regular regiments

A. ^{I saw} ~~There were~~ troops ^{I saw} at Makmia Camp. There would be drafts and troops brought back from the front

3621

Charner: with regard to transport of troops between Basra and India you have something to say?

A. It refers to Indian troops. I want to put this as far as I can - that considering the extraordinary

fine way in which Indian troops have fought ^{for the future of India and other regions} ~~that~~ it is important that they should be properly treated. I can give my own experience only.

I came down on a transport as good a ship as you could want. The "Lieutenant", British India, an excellent ship. I was not in charge; I was a passenger and it was not my

business to ^{with} interfere or comment on the conditions in any way. We got on board in the evening and I think

1100 Indian sick were brought on board at the proper hour after sundown. I paid very little attention to their being put on. That was all done tolerably well no doubt.

Next day at about midday, when going down river I went purely from curiosity ^{down} between decks to see what the conditions were, and I can say quite ^{unhesitatingly}

^{must} the conditions were deplorable and most improper. I speak very strongly about that because I think it is ^{very} most important. I do not say that it is so in every instance

the Ghurkas, the Sikhs, the ^{Punjabis} ~~the~~ Mahomedans ^{and so on} were all mixed up which is very ^{undesirable} ~~undesirable~~. A Sikh cannot help a Mahomedan if he wishes and he will not in any case

As you know natives will not help each other much in

any case, but where religion intervenes they will not touch each other. These men were so called convalescents. One's impression ^{with regard to} Mesopotamia is that a convalescent is a man for whom there is no room in the hospital owing to pressure. I do not think that that is a very incorrect statement as to what is officially called a convalescent. Certainly a very large number of these men were ^{terribly} tolerably ill, and convalescents in no sense of the term. They were hospital ship or cot cases if ever there were such cases. Scurvy was very very bad. ^{There was very} Very bad ague and fever and acute dysentery and the men were put down ~~and~~ between decks fairly crowded and nothing was being done for them at all when I went down. Speaking the language but not being ^{very} conversant with Indian conditions I went to another officer on board who was as irresponsible as myself, merely a passenger, and asked him to see the conditions. I was afraid I might have reappreciated them, but although he had spent his whole life in India ~~but~~ he was more horrified if anything than I was. The staff of that ship was one British Medical Officer who no doubt did all he could, one native doctor ^{who} was ~~was~~ pretty useless and ^{he was} could do nothing unless compelled to, and two native orderlies, so I was told, and I think it is true. There was practically no organisation of any kind and such a staff could not hope to deal with 1100 sick men. There were over 1000, and I was told 1100.

3623

Chairman: Were they practically all discharged hospital patients? A They must have all come from hospital, they were called convalescents but it is not a fair term to apply to them. No doubt you have had evidence before you already as to what constitutes a convalescent in practice in Mesopotamia. Anyhow they were men who were ^{grievously} ~~practically~~ ill and who had had ^{indebted} most severe conditions. Their rations were improper. I ~~had~~ ^{saw} myself ~~try~~ dry gram?

gram

gram
 a ~~cask~~ of dry food being served out to men who had scurvy,
 but whose legs and ^{hands} ~~hands~~ were so swollen that they could
 not attempt to eat it. There was ^{a certain quantity of} milk on board — a
 certain quantity I believe; but the sick men for whom I
 was anxious were far too ill to care. Nobody was
 taking the milk round to them, and eventually I and
 another officer got permission from the officers on board
 to buy milk ourselves and take it round to these cases
 which we did each day. It is sufficient to say that the
 conditions were gross on that ship and
 must have had a most deplorable effect
 on the minds of the Indian troops, and I know ^{that} in fact
~~it~~ ^{they} did.

went

Admiral

3624

Admiral Sir Cyprus Bridge What was the date of this
1 Towards the end of July

3625

2 This year

1 year

3626

Sir Archibald Williamson After the Fucut Commission
had finished their ~~en~~ ^{en}quiries

A There conditions in my judgment are not the
least but due to individual officers. The medical
officer in charge of the ship for instance could
not deal with a situation like that. The full
lies in men who should be taken on hospital
ships being put on transports and so on

3627

Commander Wedgwood Why ~~should~~ not the medical
officer get volunteers from among yourselves to help
under circumstances like that. There are ^{always} numbers
of military men going down

1 I think that the medical officers themselves were worn
out. Their ~~men~~ ^{man} had been doing heroic work in
the hospitals; he was absolutely worn out and
had not enough energy to tackle a big situation
like that. He did the best he could. There was
no organisation. I do not think that anybody
died as a matter of fact; I do not know
for certain

3628

Sir Archibald Williamson How many days were you
at on board

1 ^{It is} 4 1/2 days down to Karachi. Some were
destined to ~~Kutch~~ ^{Karachi} and some to Bombay ~~from~~
~~Bassa~~

3629

Quarman Where did they come from

1 From the Indian base hospital, Imagnie
~~for~~ or No 3 general hospital in Basra - I do not know

3630

Lord Hugh Cecil Can you give any further details because
it is important in examining other witnesses
for us to have these facts before us

Chapter 3

I would tell you in detail what I saw if it does not waste time and why I thought the conditions grievous

3631
 Chairman, who would discharge these people as convalescent
 I ~~do~~ ^{do} have no knowledge of ^{10 by 10} how they came ^{by} ship. I was merely a witness of what ~~was~~ ^{what} they ~~were~~ ^{were} brought on the ship. They probably came from the base hospital at Basra and very properly were sent off to India as soon as possible. When I went down below the first man I saw was a native lying quite helpless on the deck suffering from acute dysentery: he had been in the stages of acute dysentery with all that it means just using the deck round him instead of the water-closet. The stench and filth were unutterable. Nobody had moved him or looked after him ^{and} he was lying face downwards and looking very ^{very} bad. He was not dying I think. I went ^{with a} on further and ^{spat a} number of ~~bad~~ ^{bad} cases of ague lying huddled ^{being} with no blankets and nothing ~~had been done~~ ^{done} for them. The men crowded round me as I went up and said that ^{they} ~~they~~ ^{they} had nothing to eat since the evening before, - ^{some} ~~some~~ of them said since the morning before. I cannot say whether that was correct. I know that natives are very apt to say that they have not eaten when they have, so I did not pay ^{too} much attention to that but ^{the statement} ~~it~~ was so general that I had to pay ^a good deal of ^{attention to it} ~~attention~~. I found on the next deck one havildar with a gang of people round him. He was distributing rations of some kind amidst

a great hubbub. I stopped the hubbub and asked him what he was doing. He said that he was giving out rations. One man could not distribute rations to all that crowd; it was utterly impossible. ^{They} Cooking pots at this time had not been given to the troops ^{but} eventually ^{of cooking} pots were found and ^{the} arrangements were gradually ^{improved} made. It was found impossible to reorganise the ship and put all the Sikhs ~~together~~ ^{all the} together, ^{of} Mohammedalis ~~and~~ ^{together and all the} Hindus together as they should have been in my judgment. The best ~~so~~ was done afterwards that we could do under the circumstances. There were no stretchers on board for moving men about and I may say this so that you may visualise the state to which the men had ~~been~~ ^{been} reduced in many cases; ~~that when I went round with milk and food~~ ^{filled} cans with Nestlé's milk and water ~~and got~~ ^{and} a man to carry them round with ~~me~~ ^{us}, we took the worst cases. The men who were far too ill to complain, ~~and gave them milk~~. I remember ^{that} in ~~one~~ ^{one} case or many cases ~~the~~ ^a Brahmin drank out of the same glass as a Punjabi Mahomedan next door to him, which in ^{itself} ~~fact~~ ^{itself} ~~time~~ ^{itself} would ~~have~~ ^{have} created a mutiny in ordinary times. All of them ^{eagerly took} anything you could give them; I do not think that I can visualise it more definitely than that to show how great their need was or how bad their conditions were.

3632

2 Was the ship intended for hospital work or was it a ordinary transport
 It was an ordinary transport. It was obviously in this case intended for the carriage of ~~the~~ ^{the}

Convalescents

3633

Lord Hugh Cecil There was no hospital equipment

A There was no hospital equipment. I went over the ship twice a day and never

3634

Sir Archibald Wilson ^{was to the} deck where they were ^{placed or kept it} ~~that~~ used for passengers in ordinary times, ~~the~~ ^{the} cargo deck

a I should think most certainly so. The deck was fit for natures who were really convalescent

3635

2 Was it light and airy

a There were port-holes. It is not very airy at 110°. That was bad

3636

Commander Wedgwood Do you think that that sort of thing goes on every time a cargo of Convalescents goes ^{away?} Did you hear whether it was general or was this a particularly bad case?

a I never ^{with regard to that} enquired ~~into the conditions~~. I had left Basra you see. It was not my business. I merely saw this and I thought it very bad and ~~that~~ was only fair to tell the Commission

3637

Admiral Sir Cyprion Bridge This happened about eight or nine weeks ago

a Towards the end of July

3638

Chairman Where did you land

a I landed for an hour or two at Karachi ^{and} went on to Bombay

3639

2 The bulk landed ^{where -} ~~was~~ at Bombay?

a Karachi I think. Once we touched Karachi the conditions seemed to be first rate

2 And Bombay

~~I could not say. I went into the hospital~~

?

and Every body spoke well of the hospital

of an

of ~~the~~ arrangements. Everything was done promptly and well. They were given clean knaps at all ~~event~~ ^{once} and everything seemed excellent for Archibald Williamson. Were there not sufficient hospital ships

Q More were sent I know. I imagine they were only put on this transport because there was not room in the hospital ships

3641 2 If 12000 new cases of sickness in July ~~and~~ were evacuated to India, ^{only} you took a 10th or a 12th. You do not know about the rest

Q I know that the number of sick was immense. ~~It was~~ ~~during that time~~. I cannot say what the numbers were. I have a considerable knowledge of Eastern conditions and ^{I think that it} ~~it~~ will have a very grievous effect on recruiting in the future in India if troops are treated in that way. It may be an isolated instance; I have no reason to suppose otherwise;

3642 Chairman You have a note in your Statement: "Condition of ~~British~~ Prisoner Camps";

Q I put that down because I have seen in the papers that they were bad.

I merely wish to state that I think they were excellently run

3643 Earl of Donoughmore: - At Basra

A Yes. They were run as well as the conditions permitted. I talked to prisoners and they were all very content

3644 Chairman: Whom are the camps under

Q I cannot remember the name of the officer. He was a junior officer. They would come under the A.P. & M.'s Department. I do not know who the senior officer was

3645 Commander Wedgwood The Provost Marshal

15
16
A The Provost Marshal. I was probably the only person who could talk comfortably with the Turks. I know Turks and I know when they are contented. They were thoroughly satisfied and contented with the way in which ^{they} prisoners were treated.

3646

Chairman As regards the last paragraph you are able to give evidence as regards the Civil administration of the occupied territories and our relations with the Arab tribes. I should rather like to put a general question to you. What has been the effect on the tribes of our failure to reach Baghdad. I dare say you discussed this question with Sir Percy Cox.

A It is rather a difficult question to answer. The Arab tribes are in a very difficult position. They are between the Turks and ourselves and their attitude is determined, entirely, or practically entirely, by military success or failure.

3647

2 Is the failure to reach Baghdad looked on as a great military failure, or does the fact that we hold our position close to Kut counteract ~~out~~ that impression.

A It is difficult to give a direct answer. The Arabs behind the Turkish lines will be entirely pro-Turk and those on our side, the Montifik, ~~affed~~ and ~~the~~ other big tribes, have certainly I think ~~been~~ probably ^{been} restrained from more openly ²⁰⁰ co-operating with us by the knowledge of our failure but I do not think that they are very seriously ~~affected~~ affected.

3648

2 You do not think that the failure to get to Baghdad and the failure to relieve Kut has had an ^{deter} ~~disastrous~~ ^{adverse} effect on our prestige.

3649
 A It certainly has had an adverse effect, but it is an effect that will be rapidly counteracted by any military success. Of course it has had an adverse effect but it is not irremediable. Lord Hugh Cecil Now in the meantime dangerous?

A That is another matter. ~~I thought that~~ Our long unprotected line of communication is always susceptible of great interruption. It is always threatened by Arabs. We have been singularly fortunate. This applies to ^{anywhere} ~~Basra~~ up the river. Sir Percy Cox has done remarkably fine work there ^{and} by his influence with the Arabs ~~and~~ the Administration he has set up, has done a wonderful deal to keep them quiet and contented and prevent them from harassing our communications.

3650
 Chairman You know what the primary object of the expedition going up to Basra was. In its initial stages would you say that it was justified?

A It was absolutely essential to go there, possibly not on the ~~main~~ grounds which some people advocated ^{in for} but for the protection of the oil fields, although that was necessary. It was absolutely essential to go to Basra. I would not say how much farther at ~~the~~ ^{the} moment.

3651
 Earl of Donoughmore One question arising out of what the chairman just put to you as regards the attitude of the Arabs. I have noticed somewhere in the Telegrams that ^{have} come home, the suggestion that the Arabs ^{are} ~~from a~~ disposition so to speak would ^{be} ~~have~~ helped the Turk with information and so on rather than to help us. Have you come across that at all?

17
 3652 a The Arab predisposition would be entirely anti-Turk, but on second thoughts he would always assist those people who he thought were going to win. The Arab pre-disposition clearly is entirely anti-Turk.

Lord Stuyvesant. With regard to the Channel between Kurma and Basra you told us that ocean going steamers could go. What sort of draft can now go

3653 a I cannot answer definitely but I think at most times of the year, certainly when the river is highish, a 3,000 to 4,000 ton steamer could get to Kurma

2 you say it is very little done now

a I think very little done

3654 2 What is the reason for that

a I cannot tell you. There are no discharging facilities there. I do not think that the question has been studied. I was not a great deal up the river and I would not like to speak too positively

3655 2 There is no great difficulty and danger in the navigation?

+ No; Ships can get up there

3656 Mr John Hodge: Would you care to give us the name of the officer who expressed himself strongly with respect to the condition on board that ship

a I should ~~think it~~ very very much prefer not to. He is a regimental officer

3657 Commander Was he an officer of the experience
+ Yes

3658 Commander Wedgwood I want to know first of all whether you think there are enough nurses in

in the country. Did you hear ~~the~~ requests for more nurses

3659

A No
Q There were none on board this boat you ^{spoke of} ~~were there~~
A No; there were two nurses invalidated themselves

3660

Q ~~act~~ going as passengers
A You ~~think~~ ^{say} that there is great labour difficulty at Basra and that makes unloading difficult as well as repairs. ———— difficult

3661

A There is a shortage of labour all round, as is said to be; ———— there is great difficulty in getting labour
Q ~~How far~~ ^{to what extent} do they get Indian labour from India.
A I cannot say but I have heard that Indian labour is very reluctant to come. We had the same difficulties you probably remember in the Dardanelles with regard to Greek labour, but I was superseded persuaded to come and we have greater powers in India of persuasion than we had in Greece. I do not think it an ^{an} insuperable difficulty

3662

Q It is possible for Indian labour to live there as at Mombasa for instance
A Yes if they are given tents

3663

Q You have not heard of steps being taken to impress Indian labour
A There is Indian labour

3664

Q But it is free, not impressed
A I could not speak positively but I do not think there is any impressed labour. I do not know about that definitely

3665

Q In listening to your evidence ^{is one thing to the conclusion} I ~~think~~ ^{most} ~~your~~ ^{important} point is railways and ~~stuff~~ ^{proper} at port at Basra or Kurna

A Yes

1/8
3666

to you

Q Is it your opinion that it would be worth while to send out somebody to report on how, say, a million of money could best be spent on the port of Basra, assuming that we are going to stick to it

A Most certainly; I think it highly desirable that somebody competent should go out

3667

Q Is it your opinion that the British Government in view of the permanent occupation of Basra could perfectly well take in hand the making of it into a decent port and ^{that is} should get the information on that subject first of all

A I think it very important that that should be done. I think that it is capable of being made into an extraordinarily fine port

3668

Q you say that that for a year ^{and a half} after the expedition was started practically nothing was done

A I would not like to say that practically nothing was done, but I do not think that anything had been done which could be characterised as ^{an effort to} ~~change~~ Basra into ~~being~~ a very useful port

3669

Q There was no sign of making it into a permanent British port
A That is certainly so. That is just how I would like to put it. I cannot think of anything

3670

Q To take steps to make it into a permanent British port would be one of the best things this Commission could recommend

A It is most desirable

36

3671

Q Is that your opinion
to you, I think it a very proper and right thing to do

36

3672

for Archibald Williamson Is it not the case that ~~in~~ ^{only} the vessels drawing 20 feet have

2 The

access to Basra and vessels drawing 14 feet
have access to Kurma

3673

I am not sure exactly as to the size of the
ships. That sounds about correct

2 It has been I think given in evidence before
the Commission that there is only one good port
in that part of the world and that is
Koweit. Is it not perhaps a more politic
thing for our Government to spend money on
making a port at Koweit and ~~at~~ a railway
from there, than ~~doing~~ it from Basra

A That opens up the whole Baghdad railway question.
~~but~~ My own view is that Basra must be
the main outlet and the main port, and not
Koweit

3674

2 You spoke of vessels going to Kurma to discharge.
It has been given in evidence that there
is no impossibility in vessels drawing 14 feet
going to Kurma, but you must be aware that
very few sea-going ~~steamers~~ ^{vessels} draw so little
as 14 feet. They are not built except for
special trade

I Speaking without expert knowledge I should
have thought ^{that} in the British ^{India} ~~Company's~~ ^{service} there
were a considerable number of steamers
drawing about 14 feet. A very large number
of steamers drawing 18 to 20 feet ~~would~~
I should ^{think} ~~would~~ come up into the river now. Some of them
^{are} after semi discharged or semi loaded outside

3675

2 At ~~Kurma~~ F?

A Yes

3676

Commander Wedgwood Any improvement of the port
of Basra would mean dredging the bar
I Yes

3677

2 The whole point is 'Dredging' operations
 to yes. It was decided in the Baghdad railway
 negotiations that there was no difficulty
 whatever in dredging the bar. It is a perfectly
 feasible operation and ~~has been~~ reported on favourably
 I believe by everybody concerned. It has always
 been assumed that that would be done directly
 any civilized power occupied Basra

3678

Sir Richard Wilkinson For a temporary purpose
 money might well be spent on Basra but I
 was thinking of ~~an~~ ^{permanent} occupation and that was
 why I was asking the question

to exactly

3679

2 I suppose, Captain Lloyd ^{whether} you were there in
 times of peace and ^{under} permanent ^{conditions} arrangements
 the railway starts from Koweit or not it
 will still go ^{to} through Basra. That is the
 course proposed is it not

A The railway would certainly come to Basra -
 Speaking of it from north to south - ^{and} it would
 probably ^{be} ~~have~~ ^{incurred} ~~for~~ to Koweit.

3680

2 You said that there were no wharves at
 Basra ^{and} or you thought there might be one
 wharf at Magill

to yes

3681

2 General Goringe gave me the impression that vessels
 were now discharging as a matter of custom
 at wharves there. He did not say it in definite
 words

A If he gave you the impression that ocean going
 vessels were discharging at Basra at wharves
 (I am not speaking of ^{any moment} Magill) I have not seen
 it. I do not think that there is a single
 place on the banks where without proper
 land

loading stages a vessel could discharge. At Mafgill
one vessel came alongside to discharge and
possibly two

Chairman He was speaking of Mafgill I think
He said I think that only two could discharge
at a time

A Basra is going to be of ^{significant} commercial importance
in the future not to deter us from spending
money on it now from a military point of view.
In any case it is going to be of immense
importance

3688

Sir Archibald Williamson In what capacity were you
there some years ago was sent

A ~~Some~~ years ago I went down by the Government
to write a Blue book on the ^{economic} ~~economic~~ conditions
of the country. We were considering whether we
might take a closer economic interest in it as
well as Germans and Turks.

~~As~~ I was sent down there as a Trade
Commissioner to write a Blue book ^{on the} ~~that~~ whole
area between the Persian Gulf ^{and} the Black Sea

3684

Q There was much a large trade in Basra
~~at that time~~
A Yes considerable trade

3685

Q Do you know anything about the tonnage of exports
and imports

A I could give them but I have not them ^{here} ~~later~~

3686

Q One firm I heard employed 7000 labourers
A Yes

3687

Q During the date season

A During the date season

3688

Q Would that be fit picking up or shipping dates

A Picking packing and shipping

3689

Q The Vincent Commission reported in April. He
are told that at that date the Koumpout
are

accommodation on the river was capable of taking up ~~25,000~~² tons a day. You said that 40,000 tons were waiting when you were there

Q I give the figures with reserve. That was how it was represented to me by a fairly competent person. I have forgotten who it was, ⁵⁵⁰ ~~there~~ was ~~an end of all~~ ^{commenting on the} congestion. He said to me "There are 40,000 tons of goods lying in this harbour to day and the monthly ~~or~~ discharge capacity of the harbour is 30,000 tons". That is how the matter was represented to me. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of it

20

3690

Q If 250 tons a day was the capacity of the river fleet it would take 120, ~~000~~ ^{to deal with} ~~tons~~ a days ~~at~~ 30,000 tons

A I do not think that that is the logic of it at all. A great deal of it would be kept at the ~~place~~ ^{base} and not go forward at all

3691

Q The bulk of the consumption is where the ~~ships~~ ^{are}

3692

A Yes, but a great deal is required at Basra
Q You did not see a great deal of Indian labour employed

3693

A No
Q ~~He~~ ^{We} you asked if any effort had been made to get Indian labour. We were told that it had been recommended and some had been brought but not an adequate supply. Would that correspond with your information

3694

A That would correspond with my impression
Q Did you hear anything when you were ^{out here} about the condition of the drinking water

A I heard references ^{the opposite} of a complimentary ~~and opposite~~ character made to ~~my~~ ^{it}

but it has been properly dealt with. It is all chlorinated

3695 Q ~~What had you~~ ^{chlorinated} Was what you had to drink

A Not all that I personally drank I think as a matter of fact, but I know that on the river steamers the tanks are chlorinated

3696 Lord Hugh Cecil You are sure of that
A I am sure of it. I know that it is so at Amara, I am sure of it and I know that at Basra most of the main drinking tanks are chlorinated

3697 Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge Does that ~~process~~ ^{the water} make them perfectly innocuous ~~but~~

A I am not competent to say & I understand so

3698 Lord ~~Robert~~ ^{Hugh} Cecil Was the chlorination done with an inefficient process? You never heard the suggestion that it was inefficient and that the water was after all, impure

A I never heard any suggestion of it

3699 Q You do not believe it

A I have no reason to believe it at all; I have the greatest confidence in it

3700 Sir Archibald Williamson Was anything being done when you were there to provide vegetables for the troops? Were there efforts to grow them specially

A The troops at the front I believe very rarely saw vegetables. There was a certain quantity in Basra, and a supply of onions and so on. There again it is a question of communication. I heard the possibility of growing vegetables discussed but only in an academic way. It would take a great deal of organization to get Arabs to grow them in a large quantity. The various things can be got at Basra but not much good

21

if you cannot get them up, they can bring them from India
 2 Is ^{the} land suitable for growing vegetables
 + Yes I think so, but I should thought it simpler on the whole to get them mainly from India, anti-scorbutics and so on

3702

Commander Nedwood They will not keep
 + Onions will - not potatoes

3703

Lieut. Archibald Williamson Was anything done to get
 dried vegetables

+ I do not know

3704

General Sir Neville Lytton Was any attempt made at all
 to separate the castes on board the steamer
 that you had said

Castes

+ I cannot say; they were not separated

3705

2 Was it very much crowded

a There was not a great deal of overcrowding
 I should say

3706

2 There was an impossibility of getting Medical attendance
 a I cannot think that men as sick as that should be put on ships with greater facilities for comfort and medical attendance

3707

2 They were not convalescents you think
 a They were not in my judgment or in ^{the} ~~any~~ ~~judgment~~ of any ~~Doctors~~ ^{Doctors} judgment, convalescents in the proper meaning of the term. They were men very ill; I do not think any, indeed as a matter of fact but the conditions were very bad

3708

Admiral Sir Cyprian Bridge When you said that no ocean steamer went up to Kuma was that because of the draught or were the bends of the river too ^{sharp} ~~great~~ or the channels too narrow

a They do not habitually go there to unload.

I did not mean to leave the impression that none went to Kurma

3709

2 Do they ~~not~~ habitually ^{not} go because of the question of draught

A I should say that the authorities have realised rather late the possibility of ocean going steamers going to Kurma and there is not much point in their discharging at Kurma if there is no railway from Kurma. The point of their discharging ^{at} Kurma becomes operative if ^{so be} you have a railway from Kurma

3710

2 It would obstruct the river transport
+ If you had a railway from Kurma and could take an ocean going steamer along side a wharf at Kurma then you would save unloading and reloading. That is what one seeks to avoid from a labour point of view

3711

2 You mentioned amongst the cases of ^{unhygienic} cannalascence on board the steamer that you returned to India in, ^{the} cases of scurvy was scurvy prevalent amongst the inhabitants generally before we went there from your knowledge of the country

A No I do not think so

3712

2 Scurvy in the case of the British Army in 'Maopalam' is preventable then

A It is merely a question of giving fresh meat and vegetables. I should judge, ~~at any~~

3713

2 Oranpanti scurbutics that can be given to you

3714

2 An officer ^{commanding} ~~in a~~ regiment I think at ~~Allahabad~~ ^{Allahabad} I am not quite sure - said that he had been a year in the country and had never known what it was to be ^{short} ~~sure~~ of proper food

food and that he had only eating bullock, ~~foot~~
beef 12 or 14 times in the whole of his
stay there. Does it occur to you that there
is no insufficiency of supplies, ^{but} imperfect dis-
tribution of supplies

I cannot speak of the feeding conditions of the troops
at the front with any certainty because I was
not myself ~~see~~ there. The complaints were
wide and general as to improper feeding. Scoury
cases were very numerous. You cannot
get scurvy from anything, I am told by doctors
except improper diet. Therefore whether there
was sufficient or insufficient food, to that extent
it is obvious that the food which reached the
troops was not of the proper character

a2

With regard to supply I do not think
it ^{the amount} was very lavish

3715

I We have evidence that 250 tons daily can be
sent from Basra up river, and the ~~command~~ Supply
and Transport officer at the front reported
that his requirements were 350 tons a day
He was therefore 100 tons a day short.
He goes on to say that the situation was
saved by the fact that they could obtain
provisions from the country round. From
your knowledge of the country would ^{it} that be
generally be the case. Where our troops
are, that there is an adequate supply

3

37

37

37

I From my general knowledge of the country
I have found it difficult to understand why
fresh meat in greater quantity could not be
sent to the troops. There is generally a pretty
large herd of cattle in those areas and unless
the Arabs have driven them all away which

I do not think they have, I have never been quite able to understand why we should not have been able to get hold of more cattle for the troops. But I have not been into the question this time so my evidence is not perhaps of much use with regard to that.

3716

Cromman General Fanning told us ^{that} he made his troops ^{at} self supporting, but the conditions are more favorable ~~than~~ at Hasingate

Yes I should say so. There are fewer troops. The ground has not been fought over so much and the Arabs are more settled, and more milk comes in

3717

by Archibald Williamson Do the natives bring in sheep from the district

Not in quantities sufficient for an army. We make certain purchases from them ~~district~~

The witness withdrew

Ad/ferred for a short time

Croplin

Lieut