

MEMORANDUMLANDSLIDE TO RINGAROOMA RIVER

On the 20th instant I visited the property of G. Ransom, Ringarooma, where about 6 weeks ago a landslide occurred which blocked the Ringarooma River.

The facts appear to be as follows:-

Mr. Ransom has a property about 2½ miles from the Ringarooma Road, along the road to Trenah, west of the Ringarooma River. Portion of this property consists of River flats and at the point under discussion the River runs at the base of the hill to the east. Near the crest of this hill is the Ringarooma Race.

The Hill is composed of basalt and the race has been constructed partly through this rock and partly built up with basalt boulders.

About three months ago, Mr. Ransom noticed that the race was leaking badly at a point above his property where the hillside is very steep, and notified the race-keeper.

On the 11th August, the slip occurred about twenty feet below the race. Some 2000 yards of basalt soil and boulders fell down the hill and completely blocked the Ringarooma River which was then in flood.

The river, forced to make a detour round the fall, scoured out a new channel through Mr. Ransom's paddock of turnips, and to the west of its previous course.

Mr. Ransom again notified the race authorities and an inspection was made on 16th August by Mr. Muir and Mr. Walsh.

At the time of my visit, an area approximately 10 chains by 2 chains had been scoured from the paddocks.

It seems to me that although the abnormally wet season may have saturated the ground, the direct cause of the fall was the leakage from the Race. Quite a stream of water is now coming out of the ground about ten feet below the race and just above the fall. This water, running between the solid basalt and the covering basalt talus would tend to detach the latter, and bare basalt cliffs with no soil cover can be seen in the upper part of the fall. At other places below the race the ground is cracked and further falls will occur if the race is not made more impervious.

It would appear that the wisest plan is to leave the course of the river where it is at present and eventually clear and straighten the banks but there is one thing that should be done immediately. At the southern end of the slip a large myrtle tree and a high piece of the original bank are causing a barrier round which the water swirls at almost 90° to its original course and here it is cutting into the new west bank with such force that more soil is being eroded each day. No time should be wasted in having this obstruction removed.

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