

REPORT ON THE TRACK FROM PIEMAN RIVER TO
INTERVIEW RIVER MINERAL FIELDS

The sum of £100 had previously been spent to clear and condition the track from Pieman River to the camp at the Interview tungsten deposits. This work cleared a walking track to a width of 4 feet.

Considerable additional work has now been done. The track has been opened out to at least 5 feet wide, some forming has been done in the approaches to creeks and three bridges have been rebuilt.

The route chosen is unfortunate. It is 7 miles 45 chains long. It parallels the coast just inland crossing 17 creeks and the Interview River. These crossings are important since the creek gullies are steep and contain thick scrub. The actual creek crossings are fords with no firm bottom although in some cases it may not be very deep. Unsuccessful attempts at culverts construction have been made in one or two crossings by placing light poles in the mud. Each creek crossing unbridged is a potential boghole for any mechanised transport.

Almost all the remainder of the route is on open button grass plains. A few heavy tussocks have been levelled with the tractor but otherwise this greater part of the route is unimproved.

A more detailed list of the work and description of the track as it stands is appended.

It is difficult to arrive at a sensible estimate of the cost of the work on the track. Its remoteness would impose high transport costs on any organisation operating in the area and it is probable that workmen would demand of their employer additional inducements and facilities to work in this locality.

Further the work done on the track is almost entirely hand labour which is the most costly. Apart from clearing some light scrub, levelling tussocks and hauling stringers for bridgework the light caterpillar-type tractor has mainly been used for hauling supplies, fuel for itself and track making equipment on a small sledge.

It is to some extent irrelevant to point out that the work could have been done more efficiently, effectively and cheaply by using suitable mechanised equipment. The transport difficulties confronting its use are enormous if not insurmountable.

Ignoring the additional cost imposed by the locality and difficulty of access and considering only the effective work done on the track its cost by the methods employed is estimated as approaching £600 - say £650 at the most. However much effective labour time is wasted in moving men, as they must walk to and from camps to working places on the track. Also mistakes in organisation, breakages, or any phase of the work requiring normal services and facilities could prove very costly. When these factors are taken into consideration it is obvious that it would require very detailed planning and efficient organisation to avoid more than doubling the cost.

The track as it stands is not of great value in the investigation and exploration of the mineral resources of the state. It is of value only as a pack track and horses could be used on it without further improvement. To open the track to jeeps or motor traffic would involve rebuilding all the creek crossings with sidings of suitable grade. In effect the work already done apart from the possible use of the three larger bridges would be lost.

If the track were to be used as a walking track then a better and less tedious route is available as indi-

cated on the sketch map. This alternative route is only $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, it is almost all in open country, and crosses only six creeks and the Interview River. Further the creek crossings, because they are farther inland are in wide shallow depressions rather than gullies. This route is of course unmade and unbridged.

Although the work may have opened a track to the Interview River mineral field which is of greater advantage to workers on the field than a pack track, from the point of view of regional mineral exploration and investigation, we have $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles of good pack track opened northwards from the Pieman River.

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DETAILS OF WORK DONE ON TRACK FROM PIEMAN RIVER TO THE

INTERVIEW RIVER MINERAL FIELD

Pieman River: A steep approach about 5 feet wide rises from the water about 30 feet to a rough hut. The hut approximately 10' x 12' has a partly galvanised partly paling roof with a galvanised chimney.

From the hut to the top of the hill is approximately 10 chains and although forming has not been necessary all the way the track has been opened out nicely to a width of 5 feet through the thick scrub. The forming is earthwork and would require little if any explosives.

Open buttongrass then to first crossing.

Creek 1: No culvert and a muddy crossing with steep grades in and out.

Creek 2: No culvert and a muddy crossing but the grades at the approaches are more reasonable.

Creek 3: The grades are too steep for a jeep. No culvert and muddy crossing.

Creek 4: Reasonable approaches. No culvert and a muddy crossing.

Creek 5: Extremely steep slopes (impossible for a jeep) No culvert and a muddy crossing.

Up to this point the route has been in open button grass except for the creek crossings but very light scrub is now coming in.

Creek 6: Not impossible but steep approaches to a muddy crossing with no culvert.

Creek 7: Small shallow muddy gully.

The scrub between creeks is heavier.

Creek 8: The crossing is just at the top of a small waterfall. The approaches have good grade and the crossing is less muddy with a few poles presumably as cording in the creekbed.

Light scrub between creeks again.

Creek 9: Crossed at the junction of 2 creeks. Very steep approaches and bog holes at the bottom. Even the tractor has had trouble here.

So far no forming has been done where the track enters and leaves the creeks. The direct approach in and out of these gullies is responsible for the steep grades.

Creek 10: About 80 feet of forming to 5½' wide down a steep

approach. A few light poles as cording in the creek bed and an excessively steep grade out.

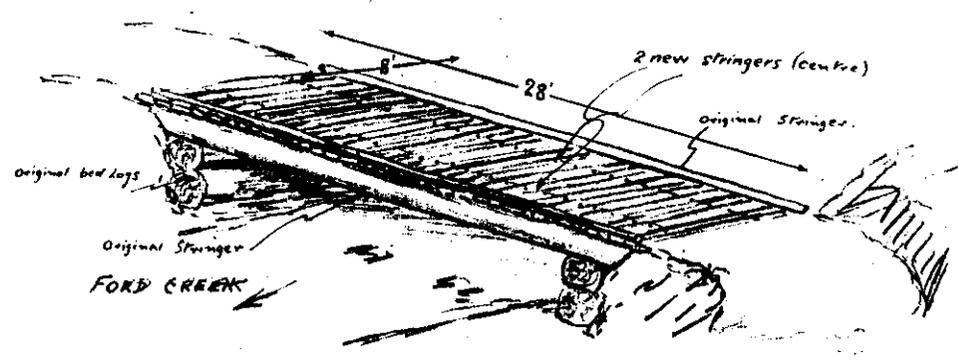
Heavier scrub between creeks.

Creek 11: Very steep approaches and a rough bridge of parallel heavy poles across the deep rock stream bed. The bridge is about 10 feet long and 8 feet wide. The stony approaches make forming difficult.

Creek 12: Excessively steep approaches a little forming on the inward side, rocks etc. on the outward side. A few cording poles in the creek.

Between this creek and the next is open button grass.

Creek 13: Ford Creek. The approach is steep. About 80' of forming has been done with a very sharp turn on to the bridge. This forming is heavier although only to 5 1/2' wide. Rocks have been blasted in one or two places. The bridge is about 30' long x 8' wide and has two renewed heavy stringers in place under the traffic and two old lighter ones on the outsides. It is cross-decked with rough slabs which are spiked to the stringers. Additional new decking slabs have been used but many are old ones. Very light pole fenders.



The outward approach is also very steep and badly formed. It would be very difficult but perhaps not impossible to get a jeep through this crossing.

Open country through to the next creek.

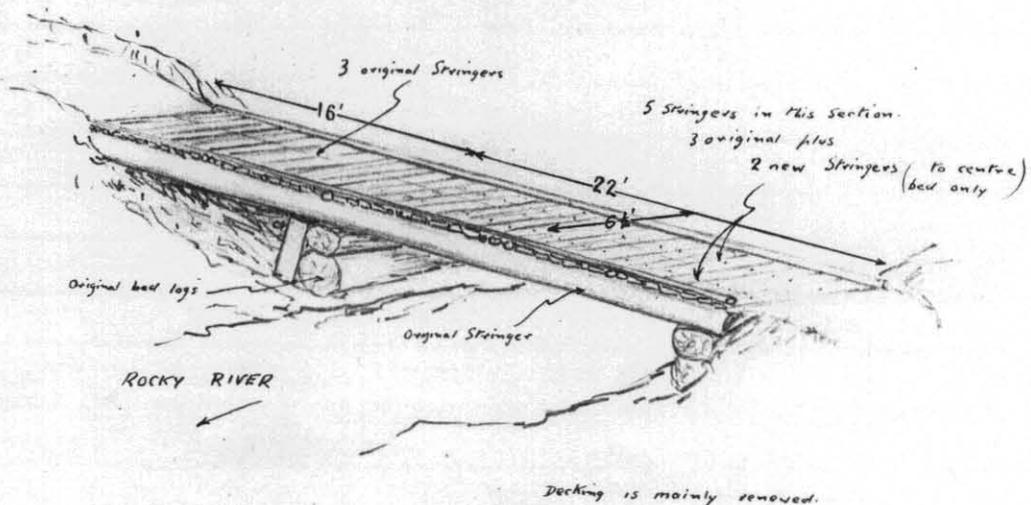
Creek 14: Muddy ford with a very steep bank out. Another potential bog hole.

Very light scrub to the Rocky River.

Creek 15. Rocky River: Very steep grade into the river, the slope is 14 1/2' or about 1 in 4. Formation for about 240 feet is about 5 1/2 feet wide and is for most of this distance quite heavy with blasting in one or two places. A very sharp turn onto the bridge.

The bridge is 6' 6" wide (between fenders)

and has 5 stringers. Two new stringers have been laid to the centre bed. Rough slab crossdecking with very light pole fenders.



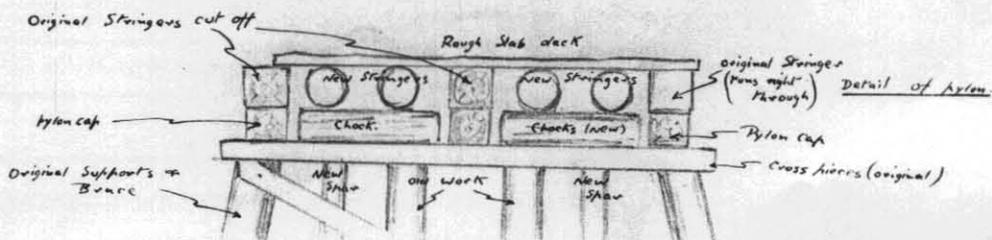
On the far side of Rocky River there is approximately 120 feet of forming up a slope of over 15° (1 in 4) and then lesser forming as the grade flattens and rocky granite boulders occur on the track. It would be impossible to get a jeep through as there are three side gullies on this northern approach to Rocky River with very steep pinches in and out.

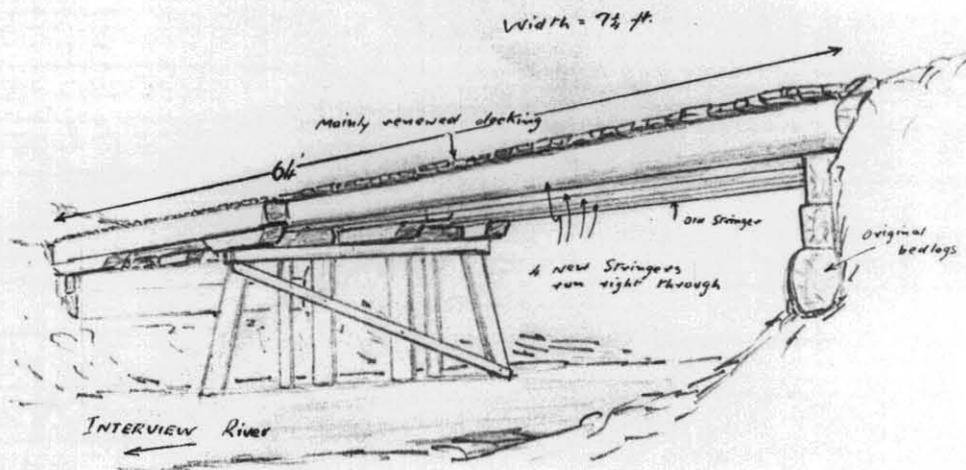
Open unimproved button grass between Rocky River and Interview River but there is a nasty bog hole just before the Interview crossing.

Interview River: The approach includes a grade of 1 in 4 with about 80' of forming to about 5½ feet wide. A small tributary with spars in the ford is crossed in the approach to the River itself.

There is no other forming work in this approach.

The bridge is 64' long and 7½ feet wide - 8' to the extremes but there are no fender logs. There are four new stringers running from bank to bank over a centre pylon which is reinforced with two new light spars. The bridge is a high level bridge and was originally wider with three stringers and pylon caps. The new spars are up to about 2 feet largest (butt) diameter).





There is a steep grade out of the Interview River. The country is then open button grass.

Creek 16: On button grass but there is an extremely steep short pinch out.

Creek 17: Another swampy place with a steep rise out. There are two other swampy depressions on the button grass between here and the workings.

The track has been made both with regard to grades and width to take a crawler type tractor with a track width of 4'6". This machine pulled a sledge 3'6" wide and 6'2" long with an overhang to increase its carrying capacity. The tractor is the only mechanised unit capable of negotiating the narrow track at present. There is rough pasture area in the vicinity of the Interview mineral field and it is possible that horses could more effectively have been used for haulage of the bridge logs, sledge etc. The tractor has the advantage of power take off for the mine pumps, etc. but a small power unit would possibly serve this purpose.

J. Elliston.