

1929

Kenya

No. 15673

SUBJECT

C O 533 / 388

Thika - Nyeri Branch Railway

Previous

Gen 4793/26

See 15526/29

Subsequent

Outlines brief history of events leading up to decision to build extension of Thika-Nyeri Branch Railway from the present terminus at Naro Moru to Nanyuki.

This extension was submitted in

No 7 & appears in No 8 of 15/5/29  
(letter with)

In No 7 of file they gave the Capital cost at £87,900 & said that the Govt would guarantee any loss including loan charges at £4678. The latter figure was a little mysterious & it is now

explained in the following table:-

	£
Int @ 5%	4096
Int @ 1%	99
Loan charges	4011
Extra interest & fees on extension	196
	£4678

ie the net loss is less than the loan charges. The above figures are based on the 5% & 1% of the total stay rate at first & the Govt will provide £5000 for the first year.

? put (Money to lead to Treasury)  
Mr Allen

All permission 27/4/29  
22.11.29

The extension is certainly on

attractive idea than you are  
there, and it cannot be said  
that the decision has been  
taken hastily.

Wald

22.4.29

WAL

Extract from Mr. Allen's Memo. on the Draft  
Estimate - 15933/28.

Item 13.

The guarantee in respect of the  
Nanyuki Railway is reduced to 24,000 as the  
estimated cost of the line has now come down  
from 281,900 to 255,600 (K.34.).  
This should be noted on the relevant pps. and  
the memorandum as to the Uganda extension to  
the Congo Border.

5526 29 (cont.)  
486, 20 (cont.)  
WAL



13  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE,  
NAIROBI,  
KENYA.

KENYA.

No. 28  
CONFIDENTIAL.

REC'D  
2 APR 1929  
COL OFFICE

9<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 1929.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 25th February authorising the immediate construction of the proposed extension of the Thika-Nyeri Branch Railway from the present terminus at Naro Moru to Nanyuki.

4526/26  
(2000)  
100 4526

2. The following is a brief history of events leading up to the decision to build the line. In response to representations made by the Nanyuki Farmers' Association to Sir Edward Denham when Acting Governor in March, 1927, the Branch Railways Committee in September that year considered the question of the extension of the Thika-Nyeri Branch to Nanyuki and recommended an immediate economic survey of the country north of the Nanyuki River with a view to ascertaining the desirability of any such extension. On the 16th September 1927 the Member for West Kenya moved in Legislative Council that Government give instructions for an immediate economic survey. The motion was passed.

3. The Acting Director of Agriculture on the 24th October, 1927, submitted a Report on the survey undertaken in accordance with the Resolutions. A copy of the Report is enclosed herewith. In November 1927, the Report was considered by the Inter-

(without map)

Colonial/

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
LIEUTENANT COLONEL L.C.M.S. AMERY, P.C., M.P.,  
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,  
DOWNING STREET,  
LONDON S.W.

Colonial Railway Advisory Council when it was resolved that, as a Railway proposition, the economic survey of the proposed extension did not in the opinion of the Council justify the construction of the line.

4. In May 1928 the Member for West Kenya again brought the matter to Government's notice but at a meeting held in June the Branch Railways Committee were unable to make any recommendation pending an examination of the future relationship of Branch Railway Lines and Feeder Motor Roads. In August last the Committee again considered the matter and resolved that the proposition be referred to the Railway Administration asking the terms on which that Administration would be prepared to construct and operate the proposed extension.

5. The proposal was once more referred by the Acting General Manager to the Inter-Colonial Railway Advisory Council which body agreed to recommend that the proposed extension of the line from Karo Moru to Nanyuki be constructed, provided this Government would undertake to guarantee the interest and sinking fund charges on the capital expenditure involved and any loss in working the extension that may arise. A copy of the Acting General Manager's letter, dated the 2nd October, 1928, reporting the recommendation is enclosed, from which it will be observed that the cost of the 18 mile extension is estimated to be £81,900 and that the approximate annual amount required from this  
Government/

Government in fulfilment of the guarantee is £4,618.

6. On the 19th December, 1928, the Branch Railways Committee held a further meeting at which sundry proposals for branch lines were considered. The Committee recommended that the extension from Naro Moru to Nanyuki should take priority over other proposals and that the extension be constructed at the earliest opportunity on the terms suggested by the Inter-Colonial Railway Advisory Council.

7. The recommendations of this Committee were duly considered by my Executive Council on the 15th February, 1929, when I was advised that a Resolution should be moved at the forthcoming special session of Legislative Council to provide funds for the extension. Concurring in the advice offered, I caused the necessary Resolution to be moved on the 24th February when the following was passed unanimously :-

"That this Council hereby approves of the expenditure of a sum of £81,900 upon the purposes specified in the Schedule hereto and undertakes to approve the inclusion of such sum in the Schedule to a future Loan Ordinance together with such further sum as may be necessary to cover the cost of the issue of such Loan."

"Be it further resolved that this Council approves the annual payment by the Colony to the High Commissioner for Transport of a sum not exceeding the amount of any loss which may accrue as the result of working the railway extension specified in the Schedule hereto inclusive of interest and sinking fund charges on the capital expenditure involved".

SCHEDULE.

The extension of branch railway from Naro Moru to Nanyuki."

The attached extract from the "East African Standard" of the 25th February gives an account of

the/

of the debate on the Resolution.

8. It is understood that the Railway Administration will be able to commence the necessary survey of the line at once and that in all probability earthworks will be commenced during the first week in July next. I am anxious that construction should begin without delay in order that a sure means of earning wages may be placed as soon as possible at the disposal of the adult male population of the Native Reserves situated to the east of Mount Kenya, in which famine relief has become necessary.

9. Since the extension will not be open to traffic before 1930 it will not be necessary for this Government to provide any sum during 1929 under the guarantee. The required amount of £5,000 will therefore be inserted in the Colony's draft Estimates for 1930.

10. As stated in my Confidential telegram of the 23rd February I will communicate later in a separate despatch regarding the application of the principles referred to in your Confidential despatch of the 5th September, 1928, to the guarantee made by the Government of Kenya to the Railway Administration in connection with this extension of a branch line.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

  
ACTING GOVERNOR.

The Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary.

NAIYUKI & NAKURU RAILWAY. ESTIMATES. FURTHER EAST

Part No. 22. 2/10/22 of 12-3-27.

In accordance with the above-quoted minute covering motion passed by the Branch Lines Committee of Legislative Council, I called for information along the usual lines from the Nanyuki Farmers' Association.

I arrived in the area on Thursday, 13th October and left it on Monday 17th October, having in the interim covered the area, looked into its development and formed an opinion as to its possibilities. The area which would be served were the line pushed on to Nanyuki is not unknown to me and also the unalienated Crown lands beyond have been visited or passed through on several occasions previously.

In making estimates of the area served the schedule drawn up by the Farmers' Association has been utilised, and I may say that the figures in the schedule are framed conservatively.

The settled area: The accompanying map will show the area which would be well served by a railway at Nanyuki and upon which figures were taken. In addition the (2) further distant areas within the surveyed areas are partially served, and (3) furthermore Crown land approximately three quarters of a million acres in extent may be opened up in a preliminary sort of way. The total area therefore would appear as follows:

Area settled and occupied well served: 216,471 acres.

Of this 31,200 acres is classed as arable land, that is 12% of the area.



The Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary.

KENYA & UGANDA RAILWAY. EXTENSIONS. NYERI-SANTU

MEMO No. N.Y. 1/12/27 of 10-2-27.

In accordance with the above-quoted minute covering motion passed by the Branch Lines Committee of Legislative Council, I called for information along the usual lines from the Nanyuki Farmers' Association.

I arrived in the area on Thursday, 13th October and left it on Monday 17th October, having in the interim covered the area, looked into its development and formed an opinion as to its possibilities. The area which would be served were the line pushed on to Nanyuki is not unknown to me and also the unalienated Crown lands beyond have been visited or passed through on several occasions previously.

In making estimates of the area served the schedule drawn up by the Farmers' Association has been utilised, and I may say that the figures in the schedule are framed conservatively.

The settled area: The accompanying map will show the area which would be well served by a railway at Nanyuki and upon which figures were taken. In addition the (2) further distant areas within the surveyed areas are partially served, and (3) further Crown land approximately three quarters of a million acres in extent may be opened up in a preliminary sort of way. The total area therefore would appear as follows:

Area settled and occupied well served: 246,471 acres.  
Of this 31,200 acres is classed as arable land, that is 12% of the area.

Area occupied and unoccupied, not well served: 101,000 acres. Approximately 10% of this area may be classed as arable, i.e. 10,000 acres.

Area, the development of which may be commenced, all non-Crown land: 700,000 acres. Of this a very small percentage may be cultivated.

Thus the construction of a line from Narro Moru to Nanyuki would bring over one million acres of land, settled or ultimately available for settlement, 15 miles nearer to the rail head.

The area within the rouge line is attractive in that it is moderately well watered, that small irrigation schemes are feasible, that it is good pasturage, and a proportion may be cultivated for foodstuffs either for export or for consumption on the farms. Cattle, pigs, sheep, wheat, lucerne, and other crops may be raised and the mere presence of a railway line many miles away has, I believe, resulted in the population more energetically working their farms. Agricultural machinery is to-day going into a district in which only a few years ago a plough was a novelty. Tractors are frequently met with.

Farms near the Forest boundary are very likely to be sub-divided in the future, so that the European population is likely to increase. Many forest glades included in the arbitrarily drawn forest boundary may be cultivated at some future date, the rainfall and the quality of the grazing being all that is to be desired.

The sub-divided area lying beyond the rouge line in the direction of Meru is country of a more open down type than the area closer to Nanyuki, and being in parts easily cultivable will also add considerably to the value of the exports from the district. Here mainly on account of the infrequency of water supplies, the farms are large but some of them may well be sub-divided and it is expected

that development will be energetically pursued in that area.

The balance of the surveyed area along the Baso Nyiba River is more pastoral in character and calls for no comment.

Of the 700,000 acres of Crown land, whilst the greater portion is low lying and at present considered as purely pastoral country, a small area may be developed agriculturally by irrigation and by the development of Sisal growing. There may be a traffic in Minerals in the future.

The Population of the area:

Estimated White population, including children	...	...	350 souls
Native population	...	...	4000

Forest production. It is considered that a line even if it were taken to Nanyuki only would assist in the exploitation of the forest areas beyond. At present milling is done almost entirely for local development purposes, but there should be a surplus for railage elsewhere if the line is taken to Nanyuki.

The Meru Reserve. The trading centre at Meru will be approximately 50 miles by road from Railhead. This will to some extent encourage the agricultural activities of the tribe and divert the small flow of traffic from Fort Hall. Little stress should be laid on the advantages which accrue to the Meru tribe from the point of view of production. The traffic in skins and hides from the Northern Frontier Province should increase.

Inwards Traffic. I am informed by the B.S. & T.O. K.A.R., that annually some 450 tons of material is sent from Nairobi to the Northern Frontier Province administration and K.A.R. There is reason to anticipate that this tonnage at least will be sent by rail to Nanyuki and there broken down for distribution.

In addition the requirements of the growing European population in the Nanyuki district should all go to Nanyuki for distribution and the increasing agricultural development should mean more inwards traffic.

I should estimate the 1929 traffic over the 15 miles section proposed to be built from Narro Moru to Nanyuki at approximately 3,500 tons gradually increasing thereafter.

Present state of Communications: It will be observed that there is an earth road of a very difficult surface from Narro Moru to Nanyuki. Although the road is not excessively undulating, it is difficult to use it in wet weather. The road if built will cost initially over £10,000 and the annual upkeep is estimated to be very high.

A glance at the map will show that roads converge on Nanyuki, not particularly on Narro Moru, so that as a centre Nanyuki must develop and it would be unwise to engender the development of a township at Narro Moru, only to leave it as it must be left when the rail is taken to Nanyuki as we believe it must be taken there.

The present railhead is really in the air and ordinary ideas of the completion of a purpose incline one to recommend that it be carried on without delay to Nanyuki.

That township being the centre for a large district as well as administrative sub-Headquarters is likely to grow and become more popular.

Finally it should I think be pointed out that the taking of the line to Nanyuki in no sense commits the railway as to its future direction if it should be extended beyond 15 miles. I believe that the development of North Kenya cannot be economically sustained without a railway terminus at Nanyuki and I feel that

that provided the cost of construction is low Government should be prepared to support the construction. The cost of transport of goods from Narre Moru and Nanyuki in the absence of a Railway can be no less than Sh. 1/- per ton mile and reasonable transport is possible only during certain seasons. Therefore the traffic should bear a charge somewhat comparable to that proposed for the Kitale-Nilgum line. If the population in the area to be served is genuine in its call for railway facilities, for some years and whilst the volume of traffic is small, it should not object to rates which are perhaps 50% lower than the cost of road transport.

(Sd.) E. HARRISON

ACTING DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE.

EH/MCH

10th. October, 1928.

E.P. 5826

The Hon. the Acting Colonial Secretary,  
Colony and Protectorate of Kenya,  
NAIROBI.

BRANCH RAILWAY LINES COMMITTEE.

With reference to your letter No. CTE. 3/16 of the 4th September, enclosing copy of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Branch Lines Committee, held at Mombasa on the 29th August, I have to state that Resolution II of these Minutes was duly considered at a recent meeting of the Inter-Colonial Railway Council, when the following Resolution was adopted by Council.

"PROPOSED EXTENSION FROM NARRO MORU TO NANYUKI.

Referring to Minute No. 321 of the present meeting, AGREED to recommend that the proposed extension of the line from Narro Moru to Nanyuki be constructed, provided the Government of Kenya will undertake to guarantee the interest and sinking fund charges or the capital expenditure involved and any loss in working the extension—that may arise.

AGREED ALSO that the Acting General Manager should estimate what the interest and sinking fund charges per annum will amount to, and also the loss in working, and that he will communicate this information to the Government of Kenya.

AGREED FURTHER that the basis of calculation for the loss of working per mile be based on the average loss per mile on the section of line from Thika to Nanyuki."

The estimated cost of extending the railway from Narro Moru to Nanyuki is £81,900.

The estimated loan fund charges on this expenditure would be:

		£	
Interest at 5%.....	4,096		per annum
Sinking fund at 4%.....	819		
Total Loan Fund Charges.....		4,914.	

So far as the loss in working is concerned, the Branch Line Statistics show that during the seven months January - July 1926, the Revenue and the Working Expenditure (including Depreciation) on the section from Thika to Narro Moru 35 miles were as follows:

Revenue.....	£	37,256
Expenditure.....		<u>36,346</u>
Excess of Revenue over expenditure.....		910
Equal per annum to.....		1,560
Equal per annum per mile to.....	£16. 8. 5.	

4. On the foregoing basis, the estimated results of working the extension from Narro Moru to Nanyuki would be:-

18 Miles @ £16. 15. 6 £296 per annum.

5. Deducting this estimated excess of Revenue over Expenditure from the Loan Fund charges the position would be:-

Estimated Annual Loan Fund Charges ... £ 4,914

Less

Estimated excess of Revenue over Expenditure..... 296

Estimated approximate annual amount that would be required from Government in fulfilment of their guarantee £4,618.

6. While the results of working the Section from Thika to Narro Maro may be taken as an indication of the probable approximate results of working the through Line to Nanyuki if, and when, it is constructed, it must be understood that the actual results may not be quite so favourable, particularly in the earlier years. It would be wise, therefore, for the Kenya Government to estimate for an annual payment of £5,000

G.D. RHODES  
ACTING GENERAL MANAGER.

## RAILWAY TO BE EXTENDED TO NANYUKI.

K. U. R. Authorities Ask Colony to  
Bear Loss as Well as Interest.

WORK MAY BEGIN IN JULY.

Government Seeking a Uniform Financial  
Policy Regarding Branch Lines.

The lack of financial enterprise on the part of the  
Railway Administration in connexion with the construction  
of branch lines was discussed in Kenya Legislative  
Council on 22nd inst. The extension of the railway from  
Nairobi to Nanyuki has been approved.

The extension which involves an initial ex-

THE

OAKLEIGH PRIVATE HOTEL  
UNDER PERSONAL SUPERVISION OF  
MRS. H. JARRETT, Managers,  
NAIROBI, P.O. Box 189,  
Phone 180.

NOW UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

THIKA  
Blue Posts Hotel

THE

FOR BREAKFASTS, LUNCHEONS, TEAS,  
DINNERS AND ACCOMMODATION.  
Situatd on Main Road,  
Grames:—"Whitethino."



# RAILWAY TO BE EXTENDED TO NANYUKI

K. U. R. Authorities Ask Colony to Bear Loss as Well as Interest.

WORK MAY BEGIN IN JULY.

## Government Seeking a Uniform Financial Policy Regarding Branch Lines.

The lack of financial enterprise on the part of the Railway Administration in connexion with the construction of branch lines in Kenya Legislative Council has caused considerable concern in Nairobi.

The proposed extension which involves an initial expenditure of £81,900 was welcomed on economic and strategic grounds since natives in the distressed Meru and Embu areas requiring famine relief may be employed on its construction.

The attention of Government was drawn to other areas requiring similar railway development and a statement in regard to the present difficulties involved in the making of economic surveys was made by the Director of Agriculture.

The Acting Colonial Secretary announced that financial policy in regard to branch lines was under consideration and it was hoped to place a definite uniform policy before the House before long.

### CAPITAL COST £82,000; ANNUAL BURDEN £5,000.

The Acting Colonial Secretary proposed the motion in the Legislative Council.

That this Council approves of the expenditure of a sum of £81,900 upon the extension of the branch railway from Nairobi to Nanyuki, and undertakes to approve the inclusion of such sum in the Schedule to a future Loan Ordinance together with such further sum as may be necessary to cover the cost of the issue of such Loan.

Be it further resolved that the Council approves the annual payment by the Colony to the High Commissioner for Transport of an amount equal to the interest and sinking fund charges on the capital expenditure involved and any loss in working the railway extension.

Summarising the sequence of events leading up to the proposal, the Acting Colonial Secretary said that in 1924 a sum of money was voted to provide for the railway extension from Thika to the vicinity of South Nyeri. It was found in the course of construction that sufficient funds were available to carry the extension beyond Nyeri, but sufficient funds could not be provided to extend the line to its natural terminus at Nanyuki and the line was therefore constructed only as far as Nanyuki. He did not think it was ever in doubt that the ultimate extension to Nanyuki could be avoided. It was merely a question of how and what the funds could be provided for the purpose.

The result of an economic survey taken in September, 1927, did not appear to the Administration and the Railway Advisory Council to justify construction at that time and the matter was allowed to lapse for a few months.

The matter was revived in May 1928 and as a result of his representations, the matter was referred to the Railway Branch Lines Committee. That Committee referred the matter to the Railway Administration with the request that a statement indicating the terms on which the Administration would construct and operate the line should be submitted. This statement was supplied to the Branch Lines Committee and the Advisory Council recommended that the extension could be constructed providing the Govern-

ment concerned, branch line statistics in the case of the Thika-Nanyuki line showed that during the seven months from January to July, 1928, the revenue was £97,256 and the expenditure £36,348. The excess of revenue over expenditure was £610 for seven months; that would mean an excess of £1,660 for the twelve months. Taking that basis on a mileage assessment, there was a net excess of revenue over expenditure of £16 per mile.

### A Warning.

The General Manager of Railways had issued a warning that it was likely, during the first year, that the actual results might not be quite so favourable and therefore advised that Government should make provision at the rate of £5,000 for the year.

The Acting Colonial Secretary gave an undertaking that the necessary survey would be made at once if the motion was passed, though it was not thought possible that the earth works could be started before July 1. The works would provide employment for the natives in the area which had been badly affected by the locust invasion. "I will use every endeavour to expedite the commencement of work if the proposal goes through."

To explain the motion the Hon. E. M. V. Kenenye (West Kenya), who seconded the motion, expressed the hope that it would bring nearer to the source of finance the native requirements.



Capt. Vaughan Kenenye.

### Other Claims.

The Hon. Conway Harvey (Laloo) believed the extension to be unjustified on economic and strategic grounds, but he suggested that other districts in the Colony were entitled to some consideration. He argued that railway extensions in other lines so far had been laid at a substantial cost, some two years ago to put up what he believed was a special case for that fertile area East and South. Government was quite definitely promised that a new and up-to-date survey

## **NIEMI**

**FOR BREAKFASTS, LUNCHEONS, TEAS,  
DINNERS AND ACCOMMODATION.**

Situated on Main Road,  
Grams "Whitrhino."

**THE**

**Blue Posts Hotel**

**THIKA**

**NOW UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.**

**OAKLEIGH PRIVATE HOTEL**

**UNDER PERSONAL SUPERVISION OF**

**MRS. I. JARRETT, Manageress.**

Phone 180.

NAIROBI

P.O. Box 153.

**THE**

**Nakuru Hotel.**

This well-known hostel (established in 1900) is the largest and best equipped hotel in the Midlands.

The Hotel has now undergone extensive additions and alterations, including a **FINE SPACIOUS LOUNGE** and new entrance to the Hotel.

**ELECTRIC LIGHT — LAUNDRY — BILLIARDS**

**DANCES, ENTERTAINMENTS,  
PUBLIC MEETINGS.**

Managers:—Mr. and Mrs. EDGAR ARCHER.

**THE**

**Naiivasha Hotel.**

**UNDER ENTIRELY NEW MANAGEMENT.  
EUROPEAN SUPERVISION, ELECTRIC  
LIGHT, HOT & COLD WATER INSTALLATION  
SPECIAL WEEK-END TERMS.**

any... subject had been brought under review by the railway administration and a fresh request was made a few months ago by the Branch Line Railway Committee...

Hon. T. J. O'Shea... South... should be submitted for his time to meet those... Hon. T. J. O'Shea... South... should be submitted for his time to meet those... Hon. T. J. O'Shea... South... should be submitted for his time to meet those...

Leading Enterprises

The Railway... lacking in... financial risks... Although the... little possible... the... way... little... O Sh... peal... Nar... The... gra... priv... are... lie... of a... He... Afr... many... there...

The Acting Colonial Secretary expressed thanks to the member for Nairobi South for calling attention to the looseness in the wording of the resolution. With the permission of Council, he proposed the following amendment to the second part of the resolution—

"Be it further resolved that this Council approves of the annual payment by the Colony to the... of ex... which... of the... reason... ab... and... l... exp... The... Secretary... added... conducted... the... sinking fund charges involved."

Other Branches

The Director of Agriculture said an appeal had been made for a statement in regard to economic surveys for branch line construction.

An economic survey of the Soddik area was made in 1925, but he did not recollect that any definite promise had been given by Government that a few economic surveys would be made in the near future in the Kericho-Soddik area.

With regard to the Denyo Sabuk branch line, two economic surveys had been made in recent years.

The subject had been brought under review by the railway administration and a fresh request was made a few months ago by the Branch Line Railway Committee... that case also should be reviewed.

There was another branch line in the offing for which a request for a survey might be made at any moment. He would like to give the House the assurance that the officers of the Department of Agriculture were most willing and desirous that these economic surveys should be completed. He thought it only fair to say, however, that the Department was not so staffed to enable it quickly and expeditiously and efficiently to meet the demands made upon it for special services of that kind. There were only two or three responsible officers in the Department with the necessary experience to do work of that kind and for some time past the demands upon those officers for special services had been very heavy indeed.

He hoped and believed that the case for any of the branch lines would not be prejudiced by delays which had hitherto taken place. He was convinced that neither the member for Nyanza nor the member for Ukamba would lose the support of any of his constituents by delays of that kind. He would like to give their constituents the assurance that they were not in any way responsible for such delays. He had advised and still advised that the nearer surveys were made to the time when it was likely that a railway would be built, the better would be the consideration given to the subject. He appealed to the members not to make numerous requests for surveys to be made far in advance of the time particular railways were likely to be built.

Replying to the debate, the Acting Colonial Secretary announced that the whole question of financial policy in regard to branch lines was under consideration at the moment and it was hoped that a definite uniform policy would before long be placed before Council.

The resolution, with the amendment proposed by the mover was adopted unanimously.