

KENYA

C/O
4938

11938

REC-1-118 21

76

TOWN AGENTS

UASIN-OISUKU RAILWAY

1921

1st JANUARY

Enclosed report by Consulting Engineers and submits observations on charges of extravagance and inefficiency against the contractors' staff by Col. Robertson. All necessary steps to prevent recurrence seem to have been taken but submits suggestions for furnishing reports to them and the Consulting Engineers as to progress of work.

Subsequent Paper

3255

In the margin:

As the C.E. has much interesting work to do, it would be better to have a copy of the report sent to him at once but it looks as if it would take even Col. Robertson all his time to get the survey through and hence promptitude.

- (1) With regard to the letter sent on 20/9/36, I send off the tal. proposed with the C.E.'s letter, adding the papers A 805 marked on the last page of the C.E.'s letter.

*Copy of this letter sent to Col. Robertson on 27 Feb. 21
Copy above tal. sent to Col. Robertson on 27 Feb. 21*

Subsequent Paper.

6270

(2) Copy of this letter sent to Col. Robertson on 27 Feb. 21

Telegram

Gas, 12/21

- + copy of the tel. to the
S.A. for info 2/7.

at once

to J.S.

2/11/21

E.

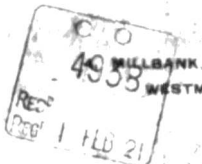
416/6



2c

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES THE ABOVE REFERENCE AND THE DATE OF THIS LETTER BEING QUOTED.

LEBHAM, BROWN, LONDON TELEPHONE 7763 VICTORIA



LONDON S.W. 1.

77

31st January 1921

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th January, No. 936/20-21 transmitting a copy of a despatch with enclosures from the Governor of Kenya Colony regarding the progress made in the survey of the Uasin Gishu extension of the Uganda Railway, in which you requested us to furnish our observations on the charges of extravagance and inefficiency brought by Colonel Robertson, Chief Engineer in charge of Surveys, against the contractors' staff and to state our views as to the steps which should be taken in connection with the charge.

2. We forwarded a copy of your letter and its enclosures to Messrs. Rendel, Palmer & Tritton, the Consulting Engineers for this work, and requested that to submit their observations on the questions raised by the Governor.

3. I have the honour to enclose for the information of the Secretary of State a copy of a report which the Consulting Engineers have sent us setting out their views. We are in agreement with them as to the difficulty of obtaining fully qualified officers for the work of the Survey of this Railway. We know from our own experience the difficulties that the contractors must encounter in obtaining properly qualified engineers for such work and we agree with the Consulting Engineers that Messrs. Griff should not be

Under Secretary of State,

Colonial Office.

blamed for trying to obtain engineers from Australia instead of from this country where experience in the special work of Railway Location in new and difficult country is not obtainable. 78

4. Colonel Robertson appears to have already taken the necessary steps to stop any such extravagance in the future and has clearly explained the way in which the work of the Survey should be done, and the fact that Messrs. Griffiths are anxious to obtain the services of a competent engineering man as Mr. H. J. Halliday, who is well known to the Government, and Mr. Hendel, Palmer & Tritton, tends to show that the Government are desirous of meeting his wishes and of giving him the best possible conditions for the work.

5. We would point out that the Government's despatch which was enclosed with your letter under No. 1000 was dated 16th November, and no doubt the instructions issued to Colonel J. K. Robertson will have had their effect. It is our opinion that Colonel Robertson has fully complied under the Survey Agreement with what has been required of him, and in accordance with what has been stated in the Memorandum and the Report on the economical grounds and we are therefore of opinion that it will not be necessary for the Government at any time to take any further steps to prevent a recurrence of the charges he has made.

6. With reference to Colonel Robertson's letter of the 5th November addressed to us, and which formed an enclosure to your letter referred to above, and to your letter of the 21st January, No. 3255/1891, with which you transmitted a copy of a telegram from the Governor referring to Colonel Robertson's letter of the 5th November, and asking for a reply by telegram, you will notice that the Consulting Engineers are of opinion

4. 39/2 that the Construction Contract, a copy of which was forwarded to the Governor by you, provides in fact for a continuous revision of the preliminary plans, sections and estimate during the course of construction, and thus both anticipates and goes further than the Survey Engineer's wishes. Their letter suggests a telegram in reply which was settled after discussion with us.

7. In conclusion we would add that it will be difficult to keep any watch over the work that is being done in the colony if it requires two months to obtain information as to what is going on, and we would therefore submit for the favourable consideration of the Secretary of State that he should ask the Governor to instruct Colonel Robertson to submit a report under Flying Head to the Consulting Engineers at least once a month to keep them informed of how the work proceeds, to enable them to be in a position to advise on any points on which the Secretary of State may require advice. We think too that Colonel Robertson should also be instructed that in the case of any urgent matters he should send a telegram to us for transmission to the Consulting Engineers with a view to these urgent questions being attended to at once. From telegrams that have passed through us from Messrs. Griffith's agent in Naifobi to the firm here we gather that a great many of the difficulties mentioned in Colonel Robertson's report have already been got over but we have no official advice as to this.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

W. H. ...

12-14, Dartmouth Street,
Westminster, London S.W.1

27th January, 1921

Uasin Gishu Railway

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter No.E.416/6 dated 15th January 1921 on the subject of the charges of extravagance and inefficiency brought by Colonel Robertson against the staff employed by Messrs Norton Griffiths the contractors we have the following remarks to make.

2. We have already had under consideration certain personal expenditure of staff which judged by Indian standards appeared extravagant and the contractors have agreed to it being disallowed; we understand that in Africa it has been customary to allow expenditure of this nature which would not be permissible in India.

With regard to the recruitment of staff from Australia, there is undoubtedly difficulty in obtaining engineers in England with experience of the special work of railway location in a new and difficult country, there being no such experience obtainable in England, and if in fact capable engineers known to the Contractors were obtainable in Australia we should not consider the additional cost of the passage from Australia to be money ill spent.

The salary of the accountant has already been very properly reduced by Colonel Robertson, who has also disallowed other items of expenditure. So far as excessive expenditure has been incurred through the inefficiency and inexperience of the Survey staff, it must be borne in mind that owing to the interruption in education and training due to the War, qualified junior engineers are not at present obtainable. We have experienced the same difficulty in

recruiting assistant engineers for Indian Railways, the fullest publicity by advertisement in the leading daily and technical papers failing to produce any suitable candidates. Nevertheless, the contractors should be advised to exercise every care in selection, and to appoint only properly qualified and experienced men as assistant engineers, surveyors and draughtsmen.

3. As to what should now be done Sir John Norton Griffiths had quite recently asked our assistance in obtaining the services of a competent engineer to take charge of the Survey and he now proposes to send out Mr. H. J. Halliday, an engineer of West African and Indian experience for this purpose. This appointment which we approve, together with the power possessed by the Survey Engineer under clause 13 of the Survey Agreement requiring the contractor to dispense with the services of inefficient members of his staff, should be sufficient to bring the staff to a proper standard of efficiency. Colonel Robertson has already very properly taken steps to check unnecessary expenditure.

4. With regard to the proposals contained in the Survey Engineer's letter No. U.G.S. 31/20 dated 5th November 1920, to the Crown Agents in respect of the form of the Construction Contract the modification of what the Survey Engineer describes as the "preliminary plans sections and estimate" is provided for in the latter part of clause (2) sub-clause (M) of the form of contract now under consideration read particularly with clauses 6, 23, 36, 41, 42 and 43. The present form of contract provides in fact for a continuous revision of the "preliminary plans sections and estimate" during the course of construction and thus both anticipates and goes further than the Survey Engineer's proposal, which we understand to be a final revision of the plans and estimates shortly after the execution of the contract, and practically at the very beginning of construction. The power of continuous revision/

revision during the course of construction is most desirable as it is a common experience to find it necessary to carry out modifications as work proceeds and experience is gained. At the time of writing the Survey Engineer could not have seen the form of Contract and he may be given the opportunity of expressing his views upon it.

82

5. With regard to your letter No.E.416/c dated 25th January and accompaniments and our conference with you on the subject, we suggest a telegram to the Governor of Kenya Colony in reply to his telegram of 17th January as follows :-

"With reference to your despatch of the 16th November forwarding copy of letter from Robertson to C.A. of the 5th November and your telegram of the 17th January Consulting Engineers and Crown Agents consider the draft construction contract, sent with my despatch of 11th fully meets Robertson's requirements. Shall be glad to receive your comments on the terms embodied in it after perusal of the terms set out therein. Robertson will have to return England to assist in settlement of final agreement when plans and estimates are ready. Should any essential alterations be then necessary you will be consulted".

2/5/42

6. We return the enclosures to your letter No. E.416/c dated 17th January, 1921 as requested and shall be glad to be furnished with copies to complete our file.

Yours etc.

(Sd) Rendel Palmer & Tritton

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Mr. ...

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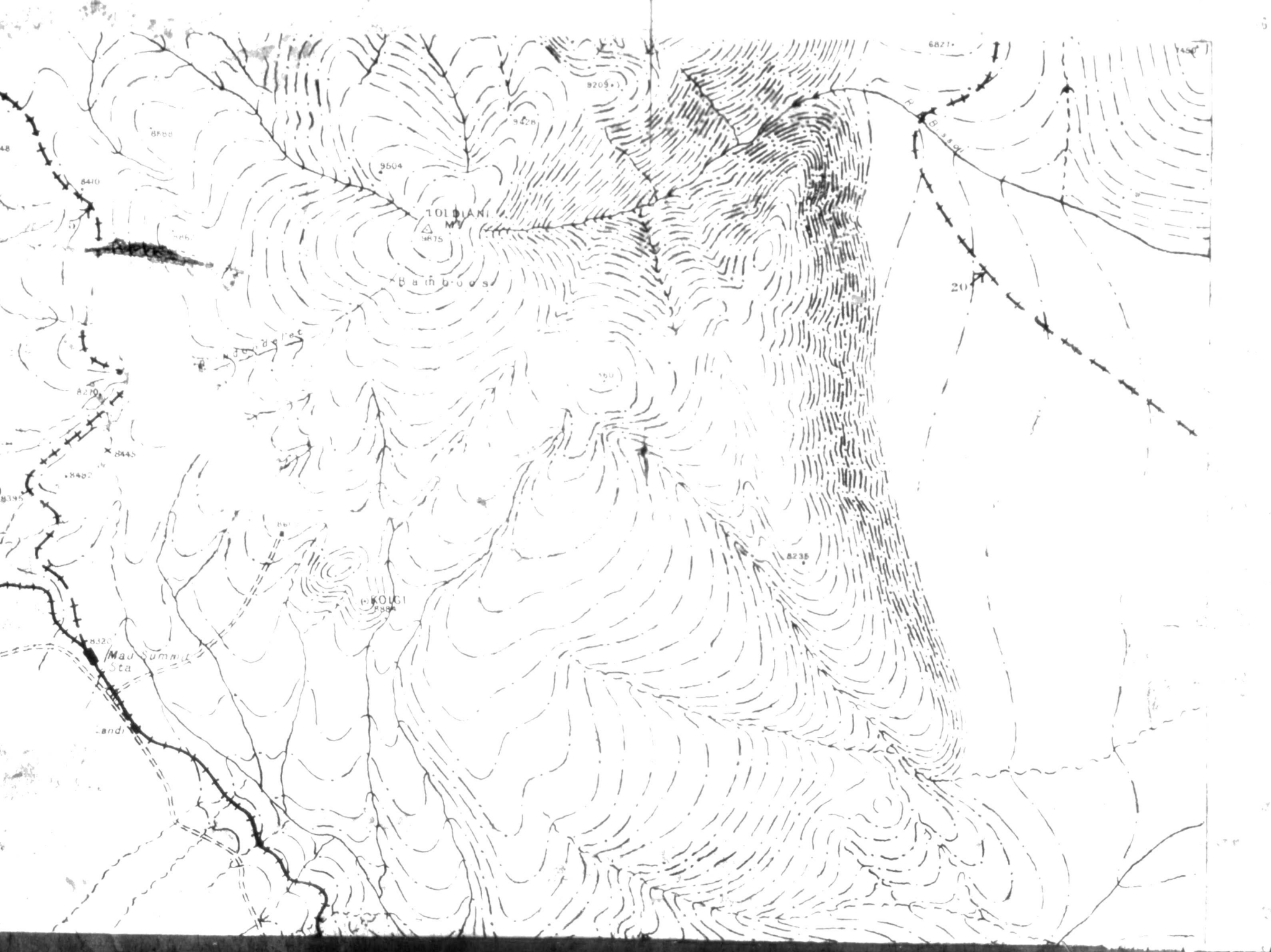
agreement when plans

and estimates are ready
~~...~~

copy ca. P Feb 21

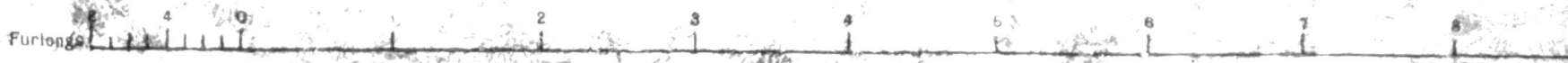
20th
A/C

Enclosures of



15

Scale - 1 Inch - 3000 Feet



FORM LINES - 100 Feet Vertical Interval.

SITON, RAED & CO. LTD., THE MAP HOUSE, 62, ST. JAMES'S ST., LONDON, S.W.

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6057

Landy 6075

6065 Mold Station

799

Landy Saw Mill 6066 6061

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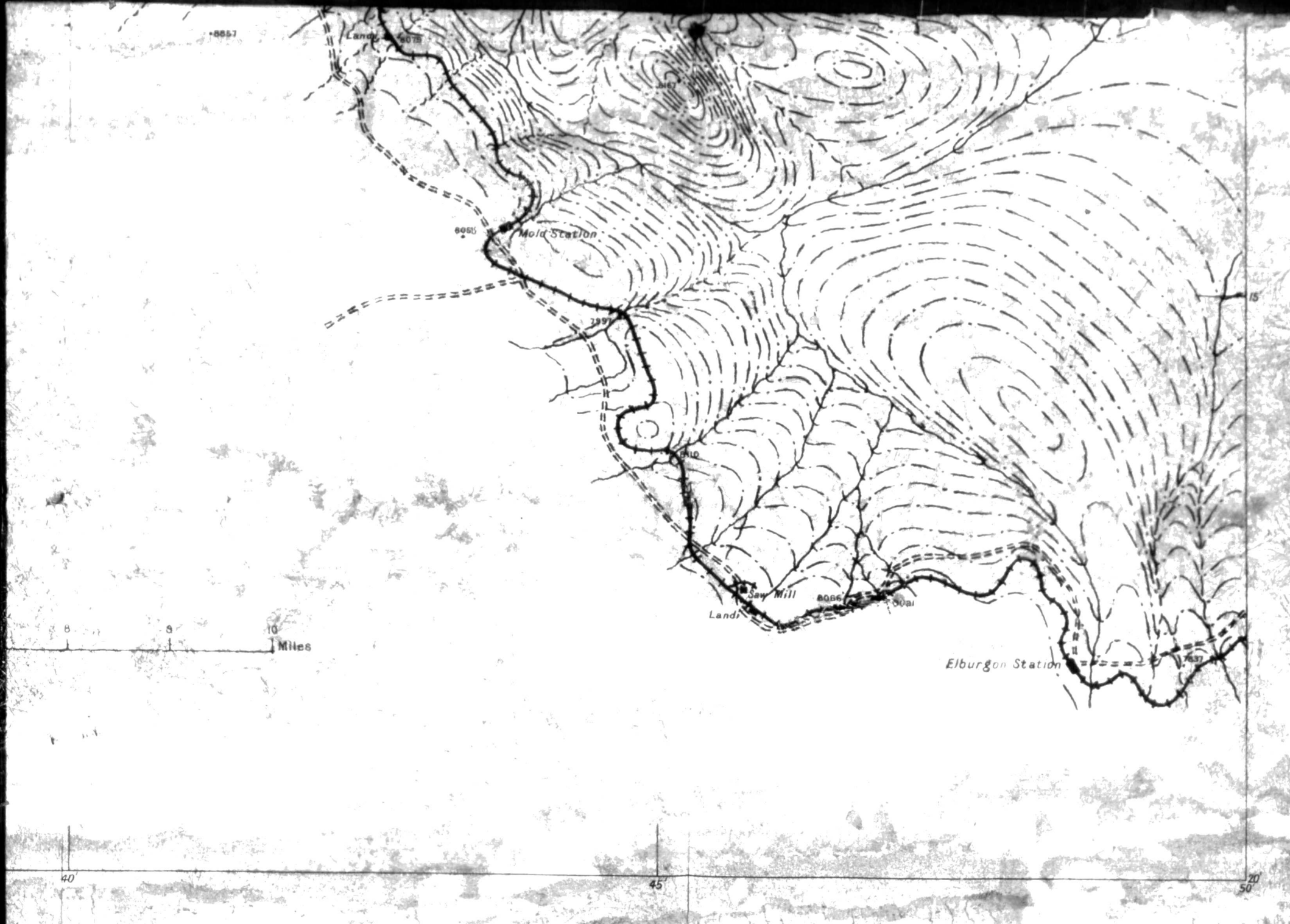
737

8 9 10 Miles

40

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20
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UGANDA RAILWAY

Uasin Gishu Extension.

Estimated Tonnage & Progress of Shipment

TONS

40,000

35,000

30,000

25,000

20,000

15,000

10,000

5,000

44,000 Tons - P. Equipment

1921 15th October

15th Nov

15th Dec

1922 15th Jan

15th Feb

15th March

15th April

15th May

15th June

15th July

15th Aug

15th Sept

15th Oct

15th Nov

15th Dec

1923 15th Jan

15th Feb

15th March

15th April

15th May

15th June

15th July

15th August

