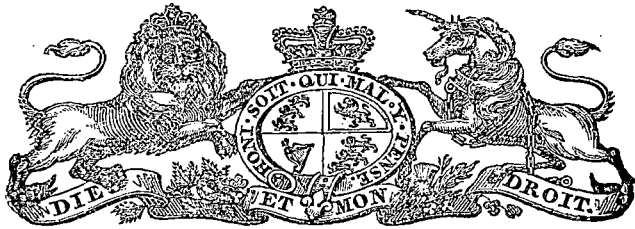


(No. 125.)



1885.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

RAILWAY FROM HOBART TO HUON:

PETITION FOR CONSTRUCTION.

Presented by Mr. Watchorn, September 29; and ordered by the Legislative Council
to be printed, October 1, 1885.



*To the Honorable the Members of the Legislative Council of Tasmania,
in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of the undersigned Residents and Property-owners in Hobart,

SHOWETH:

1. THAT the above-mentioned districts possess numerous centres of population of growing importance, and a considerable extent of fertile Crown land, especially in the Districts of Kingborough and Franklin.

2. That although the southern portion of Kingborough and the eastern portion of Franklin possess facilities for water carriage, yet the inhabitants of the northern part of Kingborough, and the western part of Franklin, are compelled to convey their produce, in some cases, considerable distances, to get to the navigable river frontage or to Hobart.

3. That the distance from Hobart to the Huon by road, and the nature of the gradients thereon, render it next to impossible for many of the residents of Kingborough and Franklin to bring their heavy produce to market by road, or to utilise their small fruit, vegetables, and small farm produce, which, owing to the lateness of the season, are available for the market several weeks after the supplies of these commodities have ceased in Hobart and the districts in its immediate vicinity.

4. That a Railway to the Huon, if carried *via* Kingston and North West Bay through the Sandfly Ranges and other parts of the districts of Kingborough and Franklin, and also in firewood, the supply of which, on the eastern and western shores of D'Entrecasteaux Channel and eastern shores of the River Derwent, has been greatly diminished by the supply for the City for upwards of half a century having been principally obtained from these localities.

5. The population of the Districts of Queenborough, Kingborough, and Franklin was, according to the latest returns, 11,057, representing about one-tenth of the whole population of Tasmania.

6. That from the latest statistics the area of land under cultivation in the Districts of Kingborough and Franklin is—under grain, 464 acres; under root crops and pulse, 1110 acres; hay, 1018 acres; gardens, orchards, and hops, 2375 acres; artificial grasses and fallow, 6545 acres; other cultivated lands, 2451 acres,—making a total of 13,993 acres; and the stock returns show 1097 horses, 5524 head of cattle, 9793 sheep, and 2563 pigs.

7. The existence of Coal, both bituminous and anthracite, of first-class quality, and of practicably unlimited quantity, in the Sandfly Ranges has been well established, and it is probable that the Railway would promote the development of this most important industry.

8. That a large portion of the export trade of Tasmania in fruit, jam, and timber is produced in the said three districts, whilst a considerable part of these commodities provided for the home market is also produced there.

9. That since the year 1883 the trade of those districts has very materially increased, and the rapid development of the fruit-growing industry therein; and the extent of the area of first-class land yet unutilised, points to the conclusion that in this respect those districts are destined to become largely increased producers of this most important product.

10. That, on the basis of the present traffic, it has been estimated by competent persons that Victoria would furnish weekly about 100 tons of freight, Franklin about 150 tons, and from Geeves Town to the Huon River about 200 tons of timber and about 80 tons of general produce direct to Hobart; whilst the passenger traffic, it is estimated, would average weekly from 180 to 200 passengers from Hobart to the Huon, and the same number from the Huon to Hobart, whilst a very considerable increase both in freight and passengers, in this and as in all other cases, would be attained as the work of settlement proceeded, and the advantages of Railway communication were more fully appreciated.

11. That the sum voted and proposed to be voted for Railways and Railway surveys since the year 1883, inclusive of that year, and including a sum of £19,000 voted for the Launceston and Western Railway in the year 1883, but exclusive of the amounts voted for the purchase of that Railway and paid for interest thereon, and on account of the Main Line Railway, amounts to £1,114,800 (one million one hundred and fourteen thousand eight hundred pounds), all of which has been, or will be, expended on lines in which your Petitioners have no direct benefit except in respect of the timber used in the construction and maintenance of the lines.

12. That your Petitioners have heretofore cheerfully borne their share through the general revenue of all moneys which have been paid for interest on the large sum already expended on Railways, and will have to pay their quota for interest on the amounts voted when expended, and they are at all times ready and willing to assist in the promotion of Railway extension where practicable throughout the Colony.

13. That your Petitioners respectfully submit to your Honorable House that the construction of a Railway from Hobart to the Huon will materially promote the development of settlement, traffic, and general prosperity of the Capital and all parts of the Colony, and will form the basis of a Trunk Line to the large track of unsettled Crown land extending from Geeves Town in a southerly and south-westerly direction. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the resources of your Petitioners' respective districts, the extent of the population, and the rapidly increasing produce of fruit and timber, which form a very considerable item of export from the Colony, and the prospects of a largely increased traffic, justify your Petitioners in approaching Parliament in this behalf.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that your Honorable House will be pleased to take into your favourable consideration the benefits this undertaking will confer on the before-mentioned districts, and the Capital in particular, and Colonial interests generally, the tendency it will have to enhance the value of Crown lands in the said districts and to develop the agricultural and mineral resources of the same, and will sanction by Act of Parliament the construction of a Railroad from Hobart to the Huon.

[Here follow 1088 signatures.]