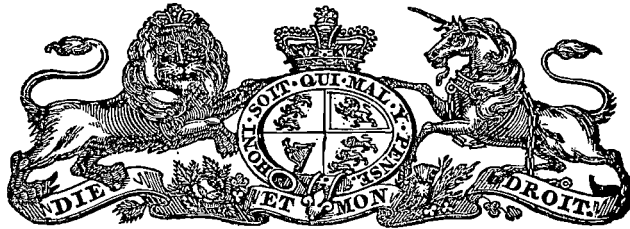


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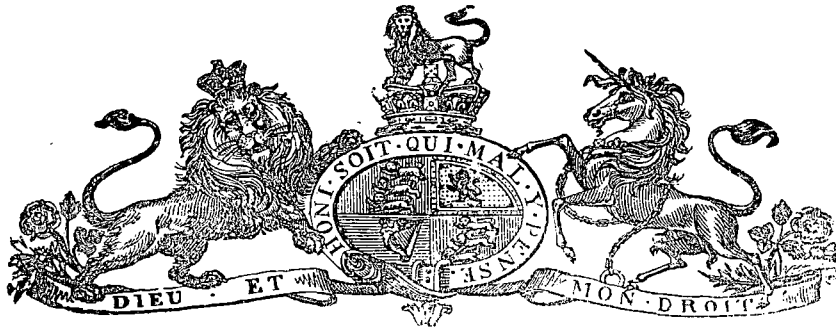
1886.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

TRACK FROM NEW NORFOLK TO THE HUON:

MR. T. B. MOORE'S REPORT.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, October 7, 1886, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed, October 14, 1886.



New Norfolk, 27th September, 1886.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit to you a Report upon the exploration and the marking of a line for a road through the country situated between the townships of New Norfolk and Victoria, on the Huon River.

According to instructions received, a start was made on the 12th August, and the cutting of a suitable line completed on the 25th September; one able-bodied assistant being employed during this time.

It was my intention to commence at the Lachlan bridge, near Mr. R. Jeffrey's saw-mill, and follow the general course of the road marked on the chart to S. Townsend's block, but abandoned this route as impracticable, because a gradual grade cannot be obtained on account of the great steepness and short length of the spur.

Line of Road.

The line begins at a road running by a corner of the 100-acre block purchased in the name of Richard Lewis, and passes through two newly surveyed 20-acre allotments applied for by R. Townsend and Menzie.

In a recently surveyed road through these lots the contour of the country has not been studied; therefore, to avoid some steep pinches, my line winds gradually round at a lower level, and continues along the sidling, passing through the unoccupied Lot 4448 at the junction of two branches of Oney's Falls Creek, thence winds round some small tributaries of that stream, and, after crossing S. Townsend's road, follows the western slope of the spur leading to his farm, thence through the south-west corner of his blocks, at a level two hundred feet lower than the unmade road surveyed sixteen or seventeen years ago. From here the line bends slightly to the eastward, and follows the contour of the country through a magnificent forest to a saddle in the great southern dividing range between the Derwent and Huon watersheds. Passing over the saddle a large bend is made to the westward, round the head branches of the Crab Tree River, and then a gradual sidling track obtained to West's blocks, the line touching on its course the unoccupied blocks of Midson and Geo. Newman.

The line begins and ends either on a surveyed road or dray tracks through private property which have been declared roads by the continual use of the public. As a practical man I deemed it unnecessary to re-mark these tracks, as there are no engineering difficulties to contend with, and the slight alterations requisite can easily be laid out by the Inspector of the District or Overseer of Works; but in this Report I wish to state my opinion as to the best routes, all of which have been carefully inspected.

The continuation of the New Norfolk end can only pass through Mr. Thos. Nicholson's property, along an unsurveyed public road which joins the main Lachlan thoroughfare near the junction of the Illa Brook with the Lachlan River, at a bridge over the former stream.

From West's blocks on the Crab Tree River either of two routes can be taken:

No. 1 is along the course of Mr. Lucas's unused timber tramway which leads to Victoria. Through the whole distance of this line a good grade can be obtained, but a great part of the distance to be traversed is wet and marshy, which would considerably add to the expense in the construction of a good road.

No. 2 leaves the tramway near S. Lovell's 25-acre lot, and passes through Mr. C. J. Parsons's purchased property near the junction of the Crab Tree and Mountain Rivers, and then joins a surveyed track for drays which leads to the Main Road from Hobart, where it joins it at a distance of about four miles from the Huon bridge at Victoria.

No. 2 route I consider the most suitable for road purposes, and recommend it for the following reasons :—

- 1st. A less expensive road can be constructed, on account of the natural hardness of the ground.
- 2nd. Less private property has to be encroached upon.
- 3rd. The distance of the two routes are similar, but on the one recommended four miles of really good macadamised road are already made.

Suitability of Line for Road Construction.

If a gradual road were made from the New Norfolk side to the saddle in the main range a grade of one in twenty can be obtained, and from the saddle to the level country in the Huon district a fall of less than one in thirty is without much difficulty secured ; and even these grades can be improved by a more circuitous route.

In laying the line out it has been my study to obtain the least expensive practical route for road construction ; and in some instances where slight rock cuttings were necessary if the above grades had been followed, the line has been taken with a greater incline, and the points of rock avoided ; but as far as I am able to judge, in no case does the grade exceed one in seventeen.

Section 1. From Sarah Ware's (Richard Lewis's) ground to S. Townsend's, the forming would be through mudstone, mountain limestone, greenstone, and sandstone débris. The sidlings in places are steep, and a little blasting may be necessary, but on the whole the work is comparatively easy.

Section 2. Through the more level forest land between Townsend's and the dividing range the depth of soil and heavy timber to be removed would entail a larger expenditure per mile than in the preceding section.

Section 3. After passing through the saddle, a soft button-grass (*Gymnoschænus sphaerocephalus*) marsh of about two hundred yards wide, and then proceeding along a patch of *bauera rubioides*, work of a more expensive character is met with. Here the greenstone boulders are large, and in a few places the rock is seen *in situ* ; but as the distance to be traversed is short, there will be no great material difference in the cost of construction per mile.

With the exception of a steep sidling, composed of loose shingle, situated about one mile and a half from the crossing on the Crab Tree River, the remainder of the work is not difficult, the last mile being through mudstone and sandstone débris, which is of an inexpensive character.

Agricultural Land.

So close to inhabited part I was surprised to find along the valley of the Lachlan River, south of S. Townsend's, about 1500 acres of unoccupied crown property, suitable for any branch of agriculture, comprising an area of land of first-class soil derived from the denudation of the higher greenstone rocks.

On the Huon Fall the first land of any value was discovered, about a mile from the crossing on the Crab Tree River, and continues in terraces and patches, in places too steep for agriculture, but suitable for dairy farming, until reaching the poor description of soil now being alienated from the Crown in the Huon District for apple-growing.

Owing to the severity of the weather, the difficult and laborious task of cutting through the dense scrubs, and the shortness of time allowed me for exploration, I was unable to thoroughly explore this part, but roughly estimate that some two or three thousand acres of good soil can be selected in the large basin formed by the tributaries of the Crab Tree River, and if a good road were made there is little doubt that much of the land which is not herein estimated as first-class would be gladly secured.

Timber.

Along the line to Townsend's the forest lands are of a poor quality, and contain stunted trees of the genus *Eucalyptus* ; the species are *E. obliqua*, *E. amygdalina*, and *E. globulus*.

But on reaching the good soil an extensive and magnificent forest of *E. viminalis* extends to the dividing range, while the intervening spaces between these grand trees is clothed with a dense undergrowth of the sweet leaf scented *Olearia argophylla* and many other well known shrubs which are always found associated with the rich soils of this Colony.

From the saddle, for about three miles on the Huon Fall, the land is timbered heavily with forests of the tall-growing *E. Sieberiana*, the lovely grained *Fagus Cunninghami*, the medicinal barked *Atherosperma moschatum*, the spiral shaped *Phyllocladus rhomboidalis*, and a species of *Eucalyptus* quite unknown to me.

The dense undergrowth consists of many valuable decorative woods, such as the beautifully marked *Telopea truncata*, the prickly-leaved *Hakea acicularis*, the whalebone-stemmed, much dreaded *Anodopetalum biglandulosum*, and the valuable yellow-wooded *Eriostemon squamens*.

The *Eucalyptus* before mentioned I have failed to find described in the botany of Tasmania; and as I have never seen it before in any of my extensive wanderings, and as also it is unknown to sawyers, splitters, and the residents of both districts, I naturally conclude that it is new to the Flora of the Colony, and have therefore forwarded specimens of the leaves and fruit to the illustrious botanist, Baron Ferd. von Müller, for his scientific determination.

The tree in the higher land attains a height of 100 feet, with a diameter of two feet, but at a lesser altitude grows more luxuriantly, and rises two hundred feet from *terra firma*, with long straight stems one hundred feet high without a limb.

The wood is of a light red colour, extremely hard, close grained, and stringy; it is of an extraordinarily great weight, and as a timber of commercial value will, I firmly believe, rival in durability our famous *E. globulus*.

Now that a passable line has been cut, it would not be a difficult undertaking for the Conservator of Forests to report upon this country, and to examine some of the valuable decorative woods of this locality, which I find unnoticed in his report.

The remaining distance of the line passes through forests of *E. globulus* and *E. viminalis*, which contain a fair sprinkling of the famous *Acacia melanoxylon*. Though this tree does not attain such a girth as on the North and West Coasts, yet much finer specimens cannot be found in the Southern portion of the Island.

In conclusion, I think the Government have sufficient warrant to place a sum on the estimates for the construction of a road to open up the large area of good land and extensive forests of valuable timber. If a vote of sufficient money could not be obtained for the whole work, I would strongly recommend that a commencement be made at both ends, leaving the central portion until a further expenditure could be made.

Approximate Heights and Distances.

	<i>Heights.</i> feet.	<i>Distances.</i> miles.
Rise from commencement of Line to Saddle—		
Camp near crossing on Townsend's Road.....	500	1 $\frac{3}{4}$
Townsend's Creek	695	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
Main Dépôt.....	1175	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Saddle, Dividing Range.....	1475	5 $\frac{3}{4}$
Fall from Saddle to end of Line—		
Camp, Crab Tree River	430	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Camp, Tributary Crab Tree River.....	1060	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
End of Line.....	1785	13 $\frac{1}{2}$
Distance from New Norfolk to commencement of Line	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Distance from Victoria to end of Line	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Total distance between the two Townships	24 $\frac{1}{2}$

The first column contains heights shown in feet, taken approximately; in column second, the estimated distance in miles from commencement of the Line.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

T. B. MOORE.

The Hon. N. J. BROWN, Minister of Lands, Hobart.