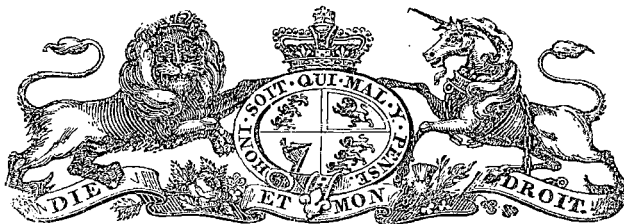


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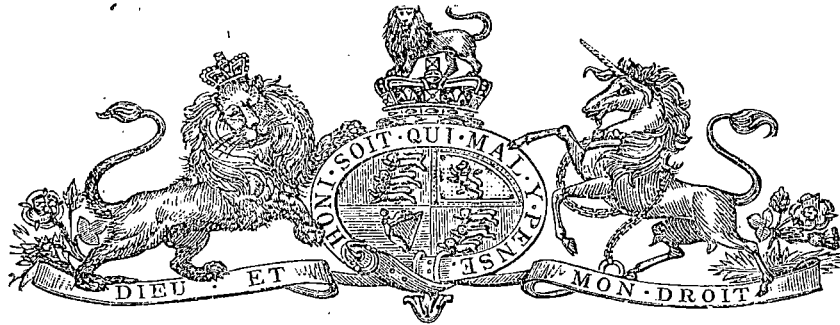
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

ULVERSTONE-BURNIE RAILWAY:

FURTHER REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER
TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

Cost of printing—19s.



*Tasmanian Government Railways,
General Manager's Office, Hobart, 6th July, 1898.*

MEMORANDUM FOR
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS.

Subject: Ulverstone to Burnie Railway.

In directing me to report further upon the proposal to continue the Western Line from Ulverstone to Burnie, you have placed before me two propositions. One, as to whether the line will pay; the other, as to whether—the line from Burnie to Zeehan being constructed—it is not desirable to bridge over the only gap in the main railway system of the Colony.

As to the first proposition, Mr. McCormick, having now a re-survey of the line, estimates that the cost thereof will not exceed £100,000, or one-half of the original estimate. Here there is a large saving of interest. The impetus given to agriculture by improved prices during the past three years justifies the opinion that the output of produce will increase, but the distance it will be carried is so short that no very material addition will accrue to the railway receipts. I therefore adhere to my previous estimate of revenue, and likewise to my estimate of working expenses.

Recasting my previous figures, by allowing for reduced interest in consequence of largely reduced estimate of cost of construction, we have—receipts, £5400; expenses, £6426; interest on £100,000 at 4 per cent., £4000; leaving a deficiency of £5026.

It is possible that joint arrangements may be entered into with the Emu Bay Railway Company, mutually advantageous, by which £500 a year could be saved in working expenses. If this should be the case the deficiency would be reduced to £4526.

There is some promise of traffic from the iron mines at the Blyth. If, as the present owners contemplate, there should be an output of 1000 tons per week, a revenue of £3000 a year should be earned by the railway. I am not, however, in a position to speak with any degree of certainty as to this traffic.

There is likewise a large deposit of iron at the Iron Cliff, at the back of the Penguin, from which some 50 tons of ore a week have been sent out for some time past, and I believe a larger quantity would be sent away if railway carriage were available. The promising copper ore discoveries on the Dial Range are also deserving of some consideration.

On the whole, I think we may look hopefully to a considerable output in minerals when the railway is completed, if a market can be secured.

To come to the second proposition, it would undoubtedly be a great public convenience if the line were constructed, always assuming that the railway from Burnie to Zeehan is completed and worked.

The question, however, if a sum of from £4000 to £5000 per annum—the estimated loss—with a possible early increase in the traffic, is not more than an adequate payment for such convenience, is one which I must leave Ministers to decide.

FRED. BACK, *General Manager.*