

(No. 134.)



1884.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

**BANGOR SLATE QUARRY ASSOCIATION'S
TRAMWAY BILL:**

**REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES OF
MEETINGS AND EVIDENCE.**

Brought up by Mr. Dobson, and ordered by the House to be printed,
September 16, 1884.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed on Friday, 1st August, to inquire into and report upon a Bill to enable the Bangor Slate Quarry Association to construct a Tramway, Railway, Wharves, Piers, and Jetties.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. MINISTER OF LANDS.
MR. COOTE.
MR. ARCHER.
MR. BIRD.

MR. SCOTT.
MR. ROOKE.
MR. DOBSON. (*Mover.*)

DAYS OF MEETING.

Thursday, 11th September. Friday, 12th September.

WITNESS EXAMINED.

Mr. William Aikenhead.

MINUTES.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1884.

Present—The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works, the Hon. A. Dobson, Mr. Scott, Mr. Archer, Mr. Rooke.

1. The Mover of the Committee, the Hon. A. Dobson, was voted to the Chair.
2. The Chairman intimated to the Committee that Mr. Aikenhead, an important witness, was prevented by illness from attending until to-morrow.
3. The Committee adjourned until to-morrow at 11 o'clock.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1884.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present—Mr. Coote, Mr. Archer, Mr. Bird, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Dobson (Chairman).

1. The Minutes of last meeting were read and confirmed.
2. Resolved, that Mr. W. Aikenhead be heard by Counsel.
3. Mr. W. Aikenhead was introduced with Counsel, Mr. Henry Dobson.
4. Counsel addressed the Committee in support of the Bill.
5. Mr. William Aikenhead, one of the promoters, read a statement in support of the Bill, and laid the plan of the tramway mentioned in Section 3 of the Bill, which was marked by the Committee Clerk.
6. Mr. Aikenhead having been examined, withdrew with his Counsel.

The Draft Bill was considered by the Committee.

Preamble agreed to.

Clause 1 agreed to as printed.

Clause 2 amended in line 20 by striking out the words "the Chairman" and inserting "one" in lieu thereof; in lines 21 and 22, by striking out the words "the Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands in Launceston" and inserting "the Minister of Lands and Works" in lieu thereof.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 3 amended in line 7, by striking out the words "Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands, Launceston, and inserting "Minister of Lands and Works" in lieu thereof.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to as printed.

Clause 5 amended in line 17 by inserting the words "two chains on either side of the plan" in line 17, and striking out line 19 and the word "deviation" in line 20, and inserting "such two chains" in lieu thereof.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 14 agreed to as printed.

Clause 15 amended by striking out the word "such" in line 17, and by adding the words "but subject to approval of the Governor in Council" to the end of the clause.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 16 to 26 agreed to as printed.

Clause 27 amended by striking out all the words after "Gazette" in line 28 to the end of the clause.

Clause 27 as amended agreed to.

Clause 28 agreed to as printed.

Clause 29 amended in lines 38 and 39 by striking out the words "subject to the provisions of Section."

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 30 to 40 agreed to as printed.

Ordered, that the plan be referred to the Public Works Department for examination as to approximate correctness.

The Committee adjourned at 12:40 P.M. till Tuesday, the 16th inst., at 11 o'clock.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1884.

The Committee met at 6:10 P.M.

Present—Mr. Minister of Lands, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Bird, Mr. Dobson (Chairman).

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Draft Report was drawn up and agreed to.

Resolved, that the Chairman do present the Report with the Bill, as amended, to the House.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

R E P O R T.

Your Committee, having taken evidence in support of the allegations contained in the Preamble of the Bill, have the honor to report that the said Preamble has been proved to their satisfaction.

Your Committee having agreed that the Preamble should stand part of the Bill, then entered upon the consideration of its several clauses.

Your Committee recommend the amendment of Clauses Two and Three so that the plan of the proposed Tramway be signed by "one of the Promoters" instead of "the Chairman of the Promoters," and so that the custody of the said plan may be placed with the Hon. "the Minister of Lands and Works" instead of "the Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands at Launceston;" of Clause Five, by inserting the definition of limit of deviation from the proposed line at "two chains on either side;" and of Clause Fifteen, and such portions of Clauses Twenty-seven and Twenty-nine as may be necessary, so as to give the Governor in Council power to fix the maximum amount of tolls to be charged by the Company.

In all other respects your Committee would recommend the Bill thus amended to the favourable consideration of your Honorable House.

ALFRED DOBSON, *Chairman*.

Committee Room, 16th September, 1884.

EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1884.

MR. WILLIAM AIKENHEAD, *called in and examined.*

By the Chairman.—My name is William Aikenhead. I am the William Aikenhead referred to in the Bill now before the Committee. By permission I lay before the Committee my statement in writing—(See Appendix A.) I propose to work the Tramway by horse-power at present, but in view of future emergencies I have deemed it advisable to take power in the Bill to work it by steam. The rails are of wood; the gauge is 2 feet 6 inches.

By Mr. Scott.—There are about thirty men employed by the Company at the present time; there is quite a settlement on the ground. This number will be greatly increased when the Tramway and Slate Quarry are being worked.

By Mr. Coote.—I believe arrangements have been made with the Marine Board as to the jetty, as it has been extended for some time.

By the Chairman.—The plan does not show the limits of deviation, as we thought of giving them up, being never likely to require them. The line was laid out by Mr. Cresswell, Civil Engineer, and we have adopted his survey. We may, however, define the limits of deviation to the extent of two chains on each side of the line. This limit would not injure any one, as the line goes through land of the poorest description,—worth from 7s. to 10s. per acre.

By the Chairman.—I am agreeable to a maximum rate of tolls to be levied being inserted in the Bill. I would prefer such maximum rate being fixed by the Governor in Council.

By Mr. Scott.—We would of course carry goods and passengers at a fair rate; though we construct the tram for our own purposes we have no objection to become a carrying company, and this will be a great convenience to the inhabitants of the district.

By Counsel.—I should object when running the tram for our own purposes to undertake to supply always a van or truck for passenger traffic alone. As I said before, the tram is to be constructed for our own uses, and though we will be always willing to serve the residents of the district, we do not think we should be bound down to do so.

I place before the Committee a plan which correctly shows the route and termini of the tramway, and this plan is signed by me as one of the Promoters of the Association.

Mr. Aikenhead withdrew.

APPENDIX A.

I am one of the owners, with Mr. David Blair, of the Bangor Slate Quarry, Piper's River, East Tamar, situate on an 80 acre section leased to myself and David Blair by the Crown, for a period of 21 years from 1st April, 1880, (Lease 763).

A tramway about 12 miles in length was constructed by a former company (now defunct) leading from the quarry to a shipping-place at Egg Island Creek, River Tamar. This tramway, which, after abandonment by the company, fell into a very dilapidated condition, has been remade throughout by the present promoters; jetty also repaired and extended to deeper water.

It is absolutely necessary for the development and profitable working of the slate quarry, that a tramway or railway should exist. The greater part of the tram passes through Crown land, a strip of which, 33 feet in width, the Crown have leased to Mr. Blair and myself for a term of 21 years from November, 1882, together with use of tramway, &c. thereon. I am not aware that any of the proprietors of private land object to the tram passing through their land, but one or two after the completion of the road refused to sell, or even grant a lease of more than one year, and then on exorbitant terms; hence it is necessary to obtain power to purchase such land as may be required for the tramway, wharf, station buildings, stores, &c.

The existing line of tram, now in good working order, is the same as that used by the old Bangor Company, and delineated on the official map of the County of Dorset. That company never obtained any lease from the Crown of the land through which the tram passes, neither did the company purchase or legally acquire any right to land from private owners.

Mr. Blair and myself ask for similar powers and privileges to those granted to the Bangor Company by the Act 38 Vict., (17th September, 1874.)

We have proved by a large expenditure the existence of slate of good quality, several shipments of which have been made to Melbourne and disposed of at satisfactory rates. Buildings for machinery, houses for miners, engines, winding gear, machinery for dressing and splitting slate have been erected, tramway remade, jetty extended, a tunnel carried into the hill above flood-level of the River Piper, and a large working shaft sunk. Altogether I believe fully £14,000 have been already expended by the promoters on the quarry, &c., and this will probably swell to £20,000 before the quarry is in full swing.

A good deal of labour is employed on the quarry and works, many of the miners having families. The number of hands employed will increase when the concern is in full working order. The opening up of the mine has been a godsend to the district, as the settlers have been able to dispose of much of their produce on the spot at satisfactory prices, instead of sending it to Launceston, the cartage to that town costing as much as £2 per ton.

The promoters are willing to become public carriers if Parliament will grant the necessary powers. Great conveniences will then be afforded to the settlers for the conveyance of stores and produce to and from a shipping-place.

The successful working of the quarry must increase the trade, commerce, wealth, and population of the Colony, besides furnishing a first-class roofing material for use in the Colony at a moderate cost. The slate can also be used for a variety of other purposes, such as mantel-pieces, paving-stones, flooring-tiles, slabs for billiard tables, rough slates for damp courses, &c.

There is not at present a quarry in the Australian Colonies yielding slate fit for roofing purposes, and if this Tasmanian industry is encouraged the benefit to the Colony in a variety of ways will be considerable

WILLIAM AIKENHEAD,