

(No. 76.)



1864.

---

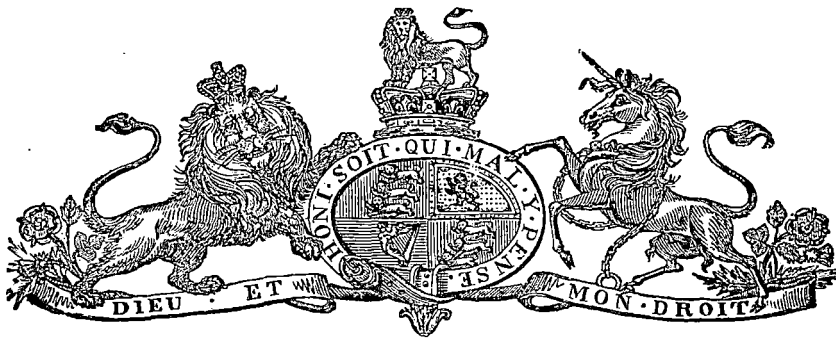
TASMANIA.

---

PETITION FROM MR. JOHN BELL.

---

Presented by Mr. Balfe ; and ordered by the House to be printed, 10 August, 1864.



*To the Honorable the House of Assembly of Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of JOHN BELL, of the Mountain River, Huon, begs most respectfully to bring before your Honorable House his present destitute condition, arising from the following causes :—

Your Petitioner in September, 1858, took up, under the 19th Section of *The Waste Lands Act*, 200 acres of land, paying down £11 odd shillings for the survey, and subsequently paying, as they became due, *four* yearly instalments on the land, amounting to £120.

That your Petitioner resides on the land, and has cleared upwards of *nine* acres of it ; has also planted an orchard and garden of about one acre, at an expense of upwards of £200,—which, with the amount paid for survey and the instalments, makes altogether an outlay of £331.

That through the expenses of having sickness in his family, and the death of his wife, he was totally unable to meet the instalment which became due in September, 1862.

That your Petitioner represented to the Surveyor-General the sad state he was in, and begged for some little time in order that he might be able to make up the amount. This request the Surveyor-General told him he could not grant ; and some time afterwards, when your Petitioner applied to him again on the subject, he was informed that, as the time of paying the instalment was past, he could not take it, and that the land was forfeited to the Crown, and would be put up to auction at the next sale. This, however, your Petitioner believes was not done.

That your Petitioner, on or about the middle of April last, asked the Surveyor-General whether there was not an extension of time granted to poor men like himself who could not possibly pay up their instalments ; if so, he should be glad to avail himself of the benefit, and pay whatever interest might be charged for the accommodation. The Surveyor-General informed him that there was no more time allowed, and that if he wished to still retain the land he must attend the auction sale and buy it over again at an upset price of £210 ; “and,” he added, “this will make you wiser for the future.”

That your Petitioner asked the Surveyor-General to be allowed to reduce his Selection to 100 acres on paying a new survey fee, and pay for the land again as at the first, forfeiting the £131 already paid. This the Surveyor-General declined to do ; and your Petitioner's land was *three weeks* afterwards put up by auction, and not sold ; and the land has since, as your Petitioner has been informed, been declared to be ordinary crown land, and open to selection to any applicant.

That your Petitioner has since made another application to the Surveyor-General for permission to take up 10 acres of the same land, offering to pay for the survey, and pay for the land as ordinary crown land. Even this request the Surveyor-General refused to grant ; but he has given your Petitioner written notice to quit the premises within sixty days, which period was afterwards extended one month : but as the latter has now expired, your Petitioner is under daily apprehension of being forcibly ejected from the premises, and so thrown naked on the world, without a home or the means of obtaining a livelihood. Your Petitioner is upwards of sixty years old, and is unable to go out to daily labour as a hired servant, but had hoped that, by securing his allotment, he had at all events a place where he might be enabled to pass his few remaining years in quiet.

That your Honorable House will give the case your kind and merciful consideration, by amending *The Waste Lands Act* this Session, is the sincere prayer of your humble Servant and Petitioner,

JOHN BELL.

*Mountain River, August 8th, 1864.*