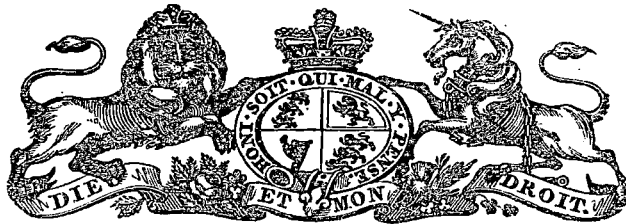


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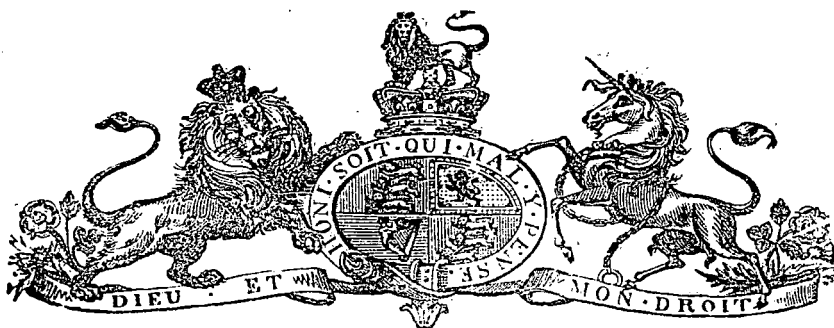
TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

C A S T R A R O A D :

LETTER AND PETITION FROM LIEUT.-COLONEL CRAWFORD.

Presented by Mr. Braddon, and ordered by the House to be printed,
January 30, 1880.



Castra, 20th October, 1879.

To the Honorable the Speaker House of Assembly, Hobart Town.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to submit to you that, on the 30th ult. the Honorable the Member for West Devon presented to Parliament a Petition, signed by myself on my own behalf and on that of certain others for whom I am agent, setting forth that the sum of one thousand pounds (£1000) voted by Parliament for defraying the cost of improvements on the West Castra Road and opening up fresh crown land for sale is being, or has been, misapplied by the Minister of Lands on the North Motton Road, and the object of Parliament thereby defeated.

I have only just learned from the Honorable the Member for West Devon that you objected to the receipt of my Petition "as informal because it asked for money." I beg most respectfully to state that such interpretation of my Petition is erroneous. I ask for no fresh grant of money; I only desire in the instance submitted that the funds already voted by Parliament for a specific purpose shall be applied thereto; and without presuming to indicate the mode of procedure that should be adopted in the case, I place it and the rightful interests of my employers in the hands of your Honorable House, as noted in the concluding paragraph of my Petition.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. CRAWFORD.

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

The humble Petition of Andrew Crawford, a Lieutenant-Colonel on the Retired List of Her Majesty's Indian Forces, residing in Castra, Tasmania.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH:

1. THAT your Petitioner is agent for a considerable number of officers and others connected with the Indian Services, who, together with and through him, have purchased 10,536 acres of crown land in or in the immediate vicinity of Castra, the greater portion of which was so bought under the provisions of Sects. 15 to 19 of the Waste Lands Act, No. 10, of 1870.

2. That Sect. 18 of the Act quoted directs that "upon five thousand acres of land or upwards being selected in such area, the Governor shall cause to be expended in making roads and bridges in or to such area any sum not exceeding ten shillings for every acre of land so selected." But, let it be remembered, that the money so expended has been contributed by the selectors themselves—was a moiety of the price they have had to pay for their land, and therefore can in no sense be regarded as a donation on the part of the State, except it may be in respect to 930 acres paid for by Immigration Certificates.

3. That so far back as 5th February, 1870, your Petitioners brought to the notice of the Honorable H. Butler, the then Minister of Lands, the absolute necessity for a direct road being made from the north-west angle of the Castra district to Ulverstone, in order that the purchasers of land on Gunn's Plains might have reasonable means of access to their properties; and your Petitioner begged that of the sums accruing from the sales of land in Castra £1000 might be devoted to the formation of the road specially voted.

4. That the request of your Petitioner was acceded to, and a line of road laid out and roughly cleared under the supervision of the late Mr. J. Frith, the work to that extent being finished in 1872.

5. That this road at once gave new life to the district of North Motton, which it traverses, and from which many of the first settlers had fled, abandoning their selections and sacrificing the payments they had made upon them.

6. That your Petitioner, deeming that this new line of road would in due time be completed, forthwith purchased on behalf of his employers 1830 acres in the Parish of North Motton, and his example has been followed by others buying to the extent of many hundreds of acres on and adjoining to the said new road.

7. That as this action on the part of your Petitioner and of others has conduced greatly to the general progress of the district, and whereas the sale of the said Crown Lands in North Motton resulted solely from the previous expenditure of the Castra money in opening up access thereto, your Petitioner felt that his constituents had a strong moral claim upon Government for the completion of the road into Gunn's Plains; and he accordingly on many occasions made representations to that effect to the successive Ministers of Lands, begging that they would obtain from your Honorable House the necessary sanction to such expenditure.

8. That on the 15th October, 1877, the Honorable N. Brown moved in his place in Parliament (your Petitioner here quotes from the columns of the *Mercury*), "That the amount of £1000 be appropriated for defraying the cost of improvements on the West Castra Road. This also he said was a branch road leading into an agricultural settlement, and it would open up more land. Since the amount had been put down he had received a letter from Colonel Crawford strongly urging the claims of the district for this sum." Your Petitioner would here observe that the claims he urged were those of the Castra (Gunn's Plains) District, and not those of North Motton, which had already received very considerable assistance in the formation of the first five miles of road leading through it.

9. That the above motion of the Minister of Lands was passed by your Honorable House: That in the month of July following your Petitioner heard that the residents of North Motton had called a meeting and had forwarded a request to the Minister of Lands that he would cause the £1000 voted by Parliament for the improvement of the South Castra Road to be laid out solely on the first five miles of it, viz., from Ulverstone to the centre of North Motton: That on the 27th July, 1878, your Petitioner addressed the Minister of Lands on this subject, and received a satisfactory reply thereto, dated 14th August, and a demi-official note of the following day, saying, "We will not expend the whole of the £1000 on the first five miles of the West Castra Road. The claims that you have brought under my notice will have full and fair consideration. Mr. Cresswell has been instructed to place himself in communication with you with a view to fixing a time for you to point out what, in your opinion, may fairly be asked for on the upper portion of the road."

10. That your Petitioner arranged with Mr. Cresswell to accompany him and inspect the upper portion of the West Castra Road and its entry into Gunn's Plains in the middle of November last, but was prevented from fulfilling this intention through a severe accident which confined him to his house for a long period. Subsequently, in March last, when he again saw Mr. Cresswell, he learnt that the arrangements of the late Minister of Lands had been cancelled, and that the Parliamentary grant of £1000 was now to be expended on the first seven miles of the West Castra Road.

11. That your Petitioner at once sent remonstrance (dated 31st March, 1879,) to the Hon. C. O'Reilly, and again at two subsequent dates, 13th June and 18th ultimo, but without avail.

12. That your Petitioner believes that the sum of £1000 under reference was placed upon the Estimates of 1877 by the Hon. N. Brown principally at the repeated and urgent representations of your Petitioner, and in recognition of the justice of the claim advanced by him; whilst by the application of the said money as now proposed the Parliamentary mandate is contravened and the objects of the grant are defeated, as no entry into Gunn's Plains will be effected, nor any fresh land thrown open for sale; whilst both those objects would be gained by adhering to the plan originally contemplated.

13. Lastly, your Petitioner would respectfully represent—quoting from the Report by Select Committee on Messrs. Pillinger's Land Case, 8th October, 1878, "That if the transactions of one Commissioner can be set aside and his representations and promises ignored by his successor, all public confidence in the department must be destroyed,"—your Petitioner therefore places his case and the rightful interests of his employers in the hands of your Honorable House; and, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

ANDREW CRAWFORD, *Lt.-Colonel.*

Castra, 8th September, 1879.