

(No. 37.)



1872.

SESSION II.

TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

HUON BRIDGE.

PETITIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the House to be printed, 21 December 1872.



PROPOSED BRIDGE OVER THE HUON RIVER AT VICTORIA.

*Lands and Works Office, Hobart Town.
27th October, 1871.*

SIR,

In accordance with your instruction, a survey of the site for a Bridge proposed to be erected over the Huon River, at a point at Victoria where the new Road terminates, has been made, and the accompanying design prepared.

In submitting the design, I have the honor to report that I estimate the cost of construction at £4000.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

FRANCIS BUTLER, *Director of Public Works.*

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER HUON AT VICTORIA.

MEMO.

I HAVE had the practicability of driving piles in the bed of the Huon River at Victoria tested, and find that they can be driven, although with difficulty, to a depth sufficient to afford a good foundation for the Bridge.

I consider that a Bridge can be built of 10 spans, with the approaches thereto, sufficiently above high flood mark, for the sum of Two thousand Pounds (£2000).

But, from the quantity and large size of the drift-wood that is brought down the river in heavy floods, I am still of opinion that a Bridge of 5 spans, as formerly proposed, would be less liable to damage therefrom, and therefore a more advisable one to erect.

FRANCIS BUTLER, *Director of Public Works.*
23rd May, 1872.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

*To His Excellency CHARLES DU CANE, Esquire, Governor and Commander in Chief
in and over the Colony of Tasmania and its Dependencies.*

The Petition of the undersigned Manufacturers, Traders, and Shopkeepers of Hobart Town:

HUMBLY SHOWETH:

THAT your Petitioners are now carrying on various trades in Hobart Town, a considerable portion of which is supplied by the people and produce of the Franklin District beyond the River Huon, which trade is often injured and impeded by the floods and strong currents to which that river is subject,—there being no bridge, punt, or other arrangement by which the people can now cross horses, carts, or heavy produce.

That your Petitioners humbly submit, as a proof of the importance of the trade between Hobart Town and the Franklin District, one or two extracts from Statistics laid by the Honorable the Colonial Treasurer upon the Table of the House of Assembly, and ordered by that House to be printed, November 8th, 1871, page 57, £625,500. Total number of Population, Table No. 1, 99,328, which gives a fraction less than £6 6s. for each individual in the Colony. The District of Franklin produced, (page 140,) articles of export in Potatoes, Hops, Apples, Pears, and Timber, £41,243,—the population being 2910,—gives an average of £14 3s. 5d. for each individual in the District, or about 125 per cent. above the general average of the total population of the Colony: and this is exclusive of Jam Fruits, Grain, Pulse, Root and Green Crops, Butter, Bacon, &c.

Your Petitioners would further state, that for several years Jam Manufacturers from Hobart Town have manufactured Jam on the Franklin Township during the fruit season, but of late have erected large and expensive steam works in Hobart Town for the improved manufacture of that article, which necessitates the sending of the fruit from the district to the capital; and to send it by boat may take from 12 to 50 hours, whereas, if a Bridge was over the Huon River, spring drays could carry the fruit fresh gathered daily from Franklin to Hobart Town in from 6 to 8 hours: and your Petitioners believe that one hundred tons would be so sent during the season.

Your Petitioners further state, that while they give a general and generous accord to the assistance afforded during the last Session of Parliament to the people in the Launceston and Western Railway District, they humbly pray that it may please Your Excellency to cause to be placed the necessary sum of money on the Estimates to cover the cost of construction of a Bridge over the River Huon at the terminus of the Huon Road, believing as they do that the work will be reproductive; for they have the report on undeniable authority that one gentleman has offered to rent the Bridge for ten years, taking the tolls and paying the Government 3 per cent. per annum on the cost of construction; another offers One hundred Pounds per annum, taking the tolls.

Your Petitioners further submit that the Huon or Southern Road leads to more Crown lands than any other road in the Colony, many acres of which are believed to be metalliferous,—some are known to be auriferous (*vide* Mr. Gould's report) near the Gordon River,—and if the said Road is completed by the erection of a Bridge in accordance with the prayer of your humble Petitioners, it is calculated to induce settlement on Crown lands, foster and improve the trade of Hobart Town, and add to the general exports of the Colony.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[Here follow 90 Signatures.]

Office of Lands and Works, 14th November, 1872.

GENTLEMEN,

I DESIRE to acknowledge the receipt in this Office of the Petition you have addressed to His Excellency the Governor, praying His Excellency to cause to be placed the necessary sum of money on the Estimates to cover the cost of construction of a Bridge over the River Huon, and also submitting that the Huon Road leads to Crown lands believed or known to be auriferous; and to assure you that at their earliest leisure His Excellency's Government will take these important relations into their consideration.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES MEREDITH.

To His Excellency CHARLES DU CANE, Esquire, Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Colony of Tasmania and its Dependencies.

The Petition of the undersigned Owners and Occupiers of Property in the Road District of Upper Huon.

HUMBLY SHOWETH:

THAT your Petitioners are owners or occupiers of property in the Upper Huon Road District, which district is situated on the south and south-east side of the Huon River, and are frequently, and often for considerable periods, prevented trading or communicating with Hobart Town from the floods and strong currents to which the said River Huon is subject.

That there is no Punt or proper means of crossing carts or other vehicles, teams, cattle, sheep, or other animals, whereby trade is frustrated by delays, dangers, and expenses.

That your Petitioners further show that the public institutions intended by a liberal Government for the benefit of all classes of Her Most Gracious Majesty's subjects,—namely, the Church, Chapel, Public School, Post Office and Police,—are all on the opposite or north side of the aforesaid Huon River, so that in times of flood or extra strong currents we are deprived of the advantages which the aforesaid institutions offer for our acceptance ; and even in fine weather, with an ordinary flow of water, it is most dangerous for our children to cross and recross the river in small boats in going to and returning from the Public School, owing to the large accumulation of timber lying against both banks of the river.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that it may please Your Excellency to direct that a sum of money be placed on the Estimates sufficient to pay for the erection of a Bridge over the said Huon River at the terminus of the new Huon Road.

That your Petitioners believe that a Bridge so placed would be a reproductive work ; that it would remove the many disadvantages under which we labour ; and that it would facilitate and increase the trade between the capital and the whole district south of the river.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[Here follow 29 Signatures.]

Office of Lands and Works, 14th November, 1872.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE the honor of acknowledging the receipt of your Petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor, praying that it may please His Excellency to direct that a sum of money be placed on the Estimates sufficient to pay for the erection of a Bridge over the Huon River at the terminus of the new Huon Road. The attention of His Excellency's Government will, at the earliest period that their duties permit, be directed to the importance of the subject on which you have petitioned His Excellency.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES MEREDITH.

To His Excellency CHARLES DU CANE, Esquire, Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Colony of Tasmania and its Dependencies in Council.

The Petition of the undersigned Ratepayers and other Residents at Franklin and in its vicinity.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT in 1864 a Select Committee of the House of Assembly upon Reproductive Works, having in view the claims of Franklin, Port Cygnet, and other settled portions of the Huon District to assistance in the construction of Roads, recommended that a sum amounting to £13,000 (See Report of Select Committee upon Reproductive Works, 1864, page 5) should be expended in the localities indicated.

That, consequently, in the year following (1865) certain sums were voted by Parliament for the construction of Tramroads at Franklin, Port Cygnet, Port Esperance, and Southport,—the amount voted for a Tramway at Franklin being £5406.

That, owing to a question as to the expediency or otherwise of constructing Government Tramways, these works were afterwards abandoned, the money voted for their construction being (except in the case of Franklin) expended upon other public works in the same immediate locality.

That, as aforesaid, an exception was made with regard to Franklin which your Petitioners cannot but consider to have been most unjust and invidious (particularly in view of the recommendation of the Select Committee before alluded to), not one shilling of the £5406 referred to having been expended upon the Franklin side of the Huon River.

Your Petitioners would further point out that this neglect of Franklin cannot in fairness have arisen from any question of the reproductiveness or otherwise of an expenditure there; as works in other localities were carried out in accordance with the vote of Parliament where no commensurate return for the outlay could by any possibility have been expected.*

That your Petitioners,—now fully recognising the fact that for the preservation of life and property it is essentially necessary that the Huon River should be bridged without delay, and believing that the District ought not to be called upon to construct such Bridge under “The Local Public Works Act,” while having to construct and keep in repair the Main Road through the District, as well as the ordinary Cross and Bye Roads,—consider that this sum of £5406, to the expenditure of which in the vicinity of Franklin they maintain they are in good faith and equity entitled, may legitimately be applied,—Firstly, to the erection of the Huon Bridge aforesaid,—Secondly, to the construction of a common Road of a cheap description in the vicinity of the formerly proposed Tramroad (thereby keeping faith with those landholders who now, as then, have no means of access to their respective holdings), and—Thirdly, if any surplus, in improving the communication between Franklin and Victoria.

Your Petitioners therefore pray that Your Excellency and Advisers will have this sum of £5406 again placed upon the Estimates for expenditure in the manner suggested.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[*Here follow 244 Signatures.*]

Office of Lands and Works, 14th November, 1872.

GENTLEMEN,

IN acknowledging the receipt in this Department of the Petition that you have addressed to His Excellency the Governor, recognising on your part the fact that for the preservation of life and property the Huon River should be bridged, and the work performed without the District being called upon to construct such Bridge under “The Local Public Works Act,” and maintaining that in good faith and equity the sum of £5406 should be placed on the Estimates to be expended in the erection of the said Bridge, constructing a common road of a cheap description in the vicinity of Franklin, and in improving the communication between Franklin and Victoria, I have the honor of informing you that at their earliest leisure His Excellency’s Government will give such consideration to the subject matter contained in the Petition as the importance of the matters therein referred to demands.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES MEREDITH.