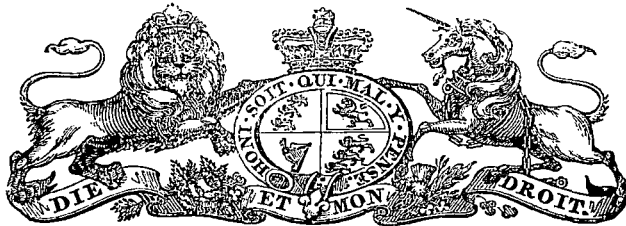


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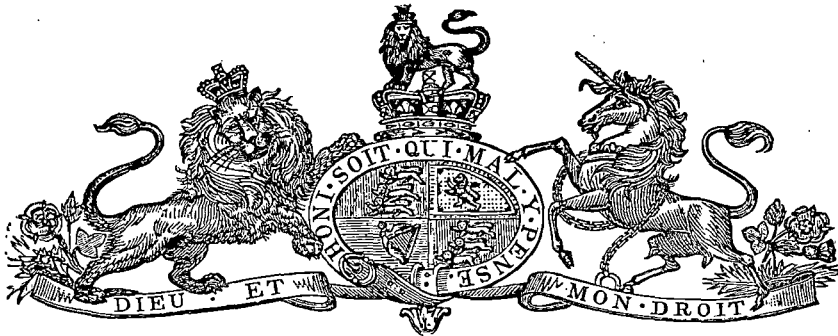
1892.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

A BILL TO AMEND "THE ZEEHAN TRAMWAY
ACT, 1891":

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES
OF PROCEEDINGS AND EVIDENCE.

Brought up by Mr. Dumaresq, November 24, 1892, and ordered by the House of
Assembly to be printed.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed, on Thursday, 24th November, 1892, to consider and report upon "A Bill to amend 'The Zeehan Tramway Act, 1891.'"

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. BARRETT.
MR. BENNETT.
MR. CONWAY.

MR. MULCAHY.
MR. DUMARESQ. (*Mover.*)

DAY OF MEETING.

Thursday, 24th November.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. H. Nickolls, Legal Manager, Hobart; Mr. C. H. Grant, Hobart; Mr. Fred. Back, Manager Government Railways; Mr. W. C. Grubb, Director of Zeehan Tramway Company, Hobart; Mr. E. Mulcahy, Member House of Assembly.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

Nil.

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 the several Clauses and the Schedule, and approved of the same without Amendment.

Your Committee accordingly recommend the Bill to the favourable consideration of your Honorable House.

H. R. DUMARESQ, *Chairman.*

*Committee Room, House of Assembly,
24th November, 1892.*

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER, 1892.

The Committee met at 11 A.M.

Present.—Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Conway, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Barrett, Mr. Dumaresq (Mover.)

On the motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Dumaresq was voted to the Chair.

The Chairman tabled the Petition from the Promoters praying for permission to submit a Private Bill to amend "The Zeehan Tramway Act, 1891." (Appendix.)

Counsel (Mr. E. Butler) appeared in support of the Preamble of the Bill, and addressed the Committee.

Mr. Harry Nickolls, Legal Manager of Zeehan Tramway Company, was called in and examined.

Mr. Nickolls withdrew.

Mr. C. H. Grant, Director of the Zeehan Tramway Company, was called in and examined.

Mr. Grant withdrew.

Mr. Frederick Back, General Manager of Government Railways, was called in and examined.

Mr. Back withdrew.

Mr. W. C. Grubb was called in and examined.

Mr. Grubb withdrew.

Mr. E. Mulcahy, Member of the House of Assembly, gave evidence before the Committee.

The Committee adjourned at 1:30 P.M. until 2:30 P.M.

The Committee re-assembled at 2:30 P.M.

Present—Mr. Barrett, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Conway, Mr. Dumaresq.

Preamble amended and agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 6 and Schedule read severally and agreed to.

The Chairman tabled the Draft Report, which was read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Chairman do present the Report to the House at its next sitting.

The Committee adjourned *sine die*.

EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, 24TH. NOVEMBER, 1892.

HARRY NICKOLLS *called and examined.*

1. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Harry Nickolls.
2. You are legal manager of the Zeehan Tramway Company? Yes.
3. You know the Bill now before the Committee? Yes.
4. It is proposed to alter the gauge of the Tramway from 3 ft. 6 in. to 2 feet? Yes.
5. What is the reason of that alteration? The reason is this: at the time the original Bill was passed we hoped to be able to make arrangements with the Government to run their trucks over our line. We have not been able to make those arrangements, as Mr. Back was not satisfied with the proposal in the first place, and, in the second place, the Government could not supply the necessary rolling-stock. Mr. Back then suggested that we should make the Tramway on a 2-ft. gauge, as we could then join with the other trams running into Zeehan, and save a lot of expense in handling goods.
6. There are tramways of a 2-ft. gauge already constructed at Zeehan? Yes. These tramways would enable ore to be conveyed from the mines right over our line and into the Government railway station without transshipping.
7. Is there any reason to believe that these alterations will be approved of by the local authorities at Zeehan—the Town Board, for instance? Yes, I believe so. Mr. C. H. Grant had a conversation with the Chairman of the Town Board, who said that the alterations proposed would suit them, and that they had no objection to them.
8. Do you know as a fact that this alteration of gauge will be generally acceptable to the mines adjoining? Oh, certainly it will; it will save them so much handling of goods and consequent expense.
9. What is your opinion as to the rates charged in the Schedule? My opinion is that they are very fair.
10. Do you consider that these rates will give the Company a fair profit? Yes, these rates will enable the Company to work at a profit.
11. The old tariff would not have been satisfactory? Not under existing circumstances. It would have been satisfactory provided we could have made the arrangements we expected with the Government; but we could not do that.

FREDERICK BACK, *called and examined.*

12. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Frederick Back.
13. What are you? I am General Manager of the Government Railways.
14. Have you been consulted as to the proposed alteration in the gauge of this Tramway? Yes. Things were not going on as the Directors wished, and they asked me if I could suggest to them any means of bringing the Tramway into existence and saving it from falling through altogether. It occurred to me then that the original Bill passed through the House was not for a Tramway, but for a 3 ft. 6 in. Railway, and, like a great many other such proposals, it was a great deal larger than the traffic warranted. This line was to run from The Queen, and carry trucks equal in size to the Government trucks, and, if possible, the Government trucks should run over the line. The Government was not in a position to provide trucks, and had they been, the Companies were not in a position to pay for their use. The Western and Zeehan and other Companies were constructing their Tramways on a 2-ft. gauge, which was quite suitable for the work they would have to perform; and the break of gauge, if this Tramway was constructed as originally proposed, would necessitate transshipping from one car to another, and add from 30 to 40 per cent. to the total cost of getting stuff from the mines to the Railway. On these grounds I suggested to the Directors that they should consult the Government as to the practicability of the alterations proposed in the Bill now before the Committee. The ore now being sold represents, I believe, £5000 a month, and if you were to multiply that by 10 or 12 or 15, or even 20, the Tramway, with the gauge as now proposed, would be quite ample to carry on the business. The great advantage would be that the mineowners would be able to run their stuff direct from the mines into the Railway Station without transshipment or any extra handling. The object of the original scheme would thus be attained at a third of the cost.
15. Would the 2-ft. gauge make any difference in regard to the carriage of passengers? No. I have travelled very comfortably on a 2-ft. gauge in nice little covered cars. If the vehicles supplied are suitable there is no reason why the line should not carry passengers very well. They could run 10 or 12 miles an hour over any country there is at Zeehan.
16. Have you inspected the Schedule? Yes.

17. What is your opinion of it? Considering that the Tramway is practically little over a mile long, I think that the Schedule is a very fair one. I think it is a case where it does not matter what the maximum is, because there will be competition by road. I do not think the Company will get some of the rates asked, such as that for parcels, for instance. Right through, however, the road will compete against the tram, and if the rates are too high people will not pay them. I do not think that 1s. per ton per mile for minerals, including terminals, is at all an exorbitant charge, when we consider that a truck will not hold more than three tons, and the Company have to keep the road in order and find haulage. This is a matter that will be regulated by the competition. We have to look out for competition by road on the Government Railways, even for the distance of several miles.

18. *By Mr. Mulcahy.*—Do you know that this Tramway Company is empowered to construct other Tramways anywhere within a radius of five miles of Zeehan? I did not know that.

19. Do you think it is wise to allow this Company to construct 2-foot tramways wherever they please? That is a question that I am hardly in a position to answer. I am quite prepared to give you my opinion upon any fact, or set of facts, but I do not think it fair to expect me to answer a question which really applies to the policy of the Government. You will always find it necessary, where Tramways are constructed, to prevent as much as possible a break of gauge. It has been generally agreed amongst mine-owners to adopt a 2-ft. gauge for their mining tramways, and that indicates that it is desirable to have a uniform gauge upon the Company's Tramways which join these lines, so that the mineowners' trucks or rolling-stock should be able to pass over them.

20. You are speaking now in regard to this particular line under consideration? Yes.

21. Do you think it advisable to make general charges applying to all Tramways alike? It appears to me that these charges will regulate themselves. As far as other Tramways are concerned, I take it that the traffic will be so comparatively small that a fair charge will be wanted to cover expenses. It is to the interest of the Colony generally, and to the West Coast in particular, that the institution should be assisted and allowed to grow, and in that case I do not think that the rates are excessive. There ought to be power for the Governor in Council to review these rates, but that I take it is provided for in the original Bill. If I were the Manager or Director of the Company, from what I see now and foresee in the future I would not be in a hurry to extend the line. The extension of those small tramways has been generally found to be unprofitable.

22. *By Mr. Barrett.*—Is there not one tramway line upon which the total cost of carriage is only 7d. per ton per mile? I know the one you speak of. It must be considered that they have not made any provision for renewal, and that the life of the tramway will not be very long. With regard to the charge of 1s. 6d. per ton per mile for merchandize as proposed in the Schedule, this comes in small quantities, and not in many tons at a time. There is also a certain amount of risk in the high-priced articles, which can well afford to pay more than minerals. I think it is a just discrimination. The most important article of carriage will be the ore, and I do not think the charge proposed for that is too high.

23. *By Mr. Mulcahy.*—Do you think there will be any objection to the Tramway going through the main street of the town? No, I do not think so. The Town Board will have power to regulate the traffic. I don't think the Tramway will be found to be worse than a bullock dray with a team of 10 bullocks.

C. H. GRANT *called and examined.*

24. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? C. H. Grant.

25. What are you? A Civil Engineer.

26. Have you been consulted professionally by the Directors of the Zeehan Tramway Company? Yes. Some time ago the Directors, not being able to do anything with the Tramway, consulted me as to what was best to be done. I advised them at once that the affair as they had it was worthless, and nothing could be done with it, and suggested that they should see Mr. Back and obtain Parliamentary powers for the alteration of the scheme. After considerable discussion my suggestion was followed.

27. What alterations did you suggest? I suggested the alteration in the gauge after fully considering the matter with the late Minister of Lands (Mr. Pillinger) and Mr. Back, and I also pointed out that the Schedule must be altered if the line was to be opened, because this Schedule, as originally passed, had evidently been made by someone who had no cognizance of railway management, and the line could not be worked on the terms set forth. I also suggested that there should be some modification in the conditions as to the use of the street. I saw the Chairman of the Zeehan Town Board, and he agreed with me, and it is now settled that the terms upon which the road will be used will be altered from what was originally proposed. As we are not going to have a 3ft. 6in. gauge railway running at a high speed, we have agreed to construct the Tramway, not upon the 12ft. roadway made by the Town Board, but upon the unmade portion of the road, and make good any damage that we do. The Town Board are agreeable to that, and are only anxious that we should go to work.

28. What is your opinion as to the reason of the alterations being made? The original scheme was drawn up entirely under a misapprehension. The original promoters thought they could practically continue the Government Railway to the Silver Queen No. 2 shaft. Mr. Back would not countenance the extension of the Railway beyond the present station, and therefore it became absurd to make a small piece of 3 ft. 6 in. gauge tramway which would not connect with anything—an isolated piece of line which no one could use. The promoters did not seem to have arranged with Mr. Back to carry out what was necessary under the terms of the Bill.

29. Do you think that the alteration in the situation of the line would be of benefit to the Town Board? I think it would be a great pity that a small 2-ft. gauge tramway should occupy the centre of the street, and really monopolise it. In the other colonies and Europe small tramways are invariably placed on the side of the street, so as to leave it free. In this case a metalled roadway 12 ft. wide, more or less, has been constructed up the centre of the street, and it is absurd that that should be disturbed by a little tramway; it would be far better along the side of the road, and that is the view held by the Town Board, only they stipulate that if the Company interfere with the road it should pay for having it made good.

30. Such an amendment in the Act would be an improvement? Yes. If not in the Act, it would be carried out by consent, as the Town Board are anxious that the work should be proceeded with.

31. Have you read the Schedule? Yes.

32. Will you state your opinion as to the charges contained therein? The Schedule has been framed on the lowest possible terms upon which the undertaking could be carried out. This Company has been only too moderate in fixing their maximum tolls, for, as Mr. Back says, these things will regulate themselves. The passenger tariff of 4d. per mile is very low for such a short line. On the Zeehan and Mount Read line the Schedule allows 4s. per mile for passengers; and the same rate is allowed on the Fingal and Mathinna line, the Mount Dundas and Zeehan Railway, and on the Government Railways, and these are all long railways, in which the profit is made on the distance. Then again as to goods, the Company only propose to ask the tolls that are in force upon other and much longer lines. The Fingal and Mathinna line, which is 18 miles long, charge 1s. 6d. per ton per mile for all goods, ores, or otherwise; and the Godkin's Tramway charges 1s. 6d. per ton per mile for crude ore; 2s. 6d. per ton per mile for dressed ore; 2s. 6d. per ton per mile for machinery; 3s. per ton per mile for merchandise; and 3s. 6d. per ton per mile for bullion. The Zeehan Tramway Company only propose to charge 1s. 6d. per ton per mile for general merchandise, and 1s. per ton per mile for minerals, so that the terms are almost absurdly low when applied to such a short line. The tolls for parcels will, as Mr. Back has explained, regulate themselves, and will be only what the public will pay. The charges here are the identical charges allowed to the Mount Zeehan and Dundas Railway Company. This alteration now proposed will be a great improvement upon the original Bill, which I regard as a monstrosity.

33. *By Mr. Mulcahy.*—Is it not the case in Hobart that the Tramway Company have to maintain a certain portion of the street? No, only the width of the tramway itself. In Zeehan the street is unmade, except for a width of 12ft. in the centre; and it is therefore suggested that we should not interfere with the made portion. So, instead of interfering with the road, the Tramway Company will put down a good gravelled way 5 or 6 feet wide. The 3ft. 6in. gauge line, as originally proposed, was to monopolise the whole of the 12ft. width of made road, so a provision was put in the original Bill compelling the Company to keep it in order; but that is not required now.

34. The Town Board approached you on this point, and wished that special care should be taken in regard to the maintenance of that portion of the road? The proposal now is not to interfere with that 12ft. width of road at all, or pay the Town Board for making it good if it is interfered with.

35. Then the Company does not improve the road? Yes, it does. It maintains an extra 5ft. width of good road.

36. What is the length of this proposed line? A little over a mile is proposed to be constructed at present, but it is over two miles to No. 2 shaft.

WILLIAM COLEMAN GRUBB *called and examined.*

37. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? William Coleman Grubb.

38. What are you? I am a merchant and contractor.

39. You are one of the Directors of the Zeehan Tramway Company? Yes.

40. You are also Legal Manager of Grubb's Silver Mining Company? Yes.

41. Will you give us your opinion in regard to the alterations in the Zeehan Tramway Act proposed in the Bill now before the Committee? I think the alterations from a 3ft. 6in. gauge to a 2ft. gauge would be a very desirable one for many reasons, the most important one being that nearly all the branch lines leading to the mines are of a 2ft. gauge, so that transshipment would be necessary if this Tramway was made 3 feet 6 inches wide, entailing extra cost in the carriage of goods.

42. Will you give us your opinion as to the Schedule of charges proposed? From my experience of the Grubb Company's Tramway I think that the charges proposed in the Schedule are rather low. Our tramway is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, and 1s. per ton per mile does not really pay. We cannot expect to get a distance of more than two miles on the Zeehan Tramway for a considerable time, and most of the traffic will average one mile, so that the charges seem very low, especially that for ore, upon which the Company chiefly depends.

43. From your own knowledge do you know whether the Zeehan Town Board are anxious that you should go on with this work? When I was in Zeehan some three months ago I was speaking to a member of the Board, and he said the Board was anxious that we should go on with the work, and would be most happy to work with us in forming the road. This line would be a great convenience to the public, especially in winter, when the roads are very bad.

44. When you spoke to that member of the Town Board, was the change of position from the middle to the side of the road determined on? At that time we did not exactly know what was going to be done in the matter.

45. Will this Tramway be worked by steam or horse power? I think it will be horse power, and steam power when there is sufficient traffic.

46. *By Mr. Mulcahy.*—You are one of the promoters of this Tramway Company? Yes.

47. Is there a prospect of this work going on immediately if this Bill is passed? I believe the work will be gone on with shortly if this Bill is passed. It would have been gone on with under the original Bill but for the fact that Mr. Back objected to allow us to connect with the Government line in any way. In fact Mr. Back should have been consulted before we decided upon a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, and his not having been so consulted was, I admit, an oversight.

EDWARD MULCAHY, *called and examined.*

48. *By the Chairman.*—What is your name? Edward Mulcahy.

49. What are you? A Draper by profession, and a Member of the House of Assembly.

50. Can you tell us whether there are any other lines of a 2 ft. gauge at Zeehan? Yes, there are several I know: for instance, the Argent line, the Montana line, the Western line (recently completed), and the Oceana line. They all work satisfactorily as far as I know.

APPENDIX.

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

The humble Petition of Edward James Burgess, William Coleman Grubb, Andrew Paton Miller, Thomas Augustus Reynolds, and Howard Edward Wright, all of Hobart, in Tasmania,

SHEWETH:

1. THAT within three months previously to the presentation hereof notice of the intention of your Petitioners to apply for a Private Bill was published, as is by the Standing Rules and Orders of your Honourable House prescribed, as follows; that is to say—

In the *Hobart Gazette* on the nineteenth and twenty-sixth days of July, and the second and ninth days of August now last past.

In the *Mercury*, being a public newspaper published in Hobart, on the twentieth and twenty-seventh days of July, and the third and tenth days of August now last past.

In the *Zeehan and Dundas Herald*, being a public newspaper published in or nearest to the district affected by the Bill, on the twenty-seventh day of July, and the first, the eighth, and the fifteenth days of August now last past;

which said notice contained a true statement of the general objects of the Bill as hereinafter set forth.

2. That the general objects of the said Bill are—

To amend "The Zeehan Tramway Act, 1891," by authorising your Petitioners to construct the Tramways on any gauge not less than two feet and not more than three feet and six inches;

And by making further provision in regard to the tolls and charges to be levied and received by the said Petitioners.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray for leave to introduce the said Bill.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

EDWD. J. BURGESS.

W. C. GRUBB.

ANDREW P. MILLER.

T. A. REYNOLDS.

HOWARD E. WRIGHT.

Dated this sixteenth day of August, 1892.