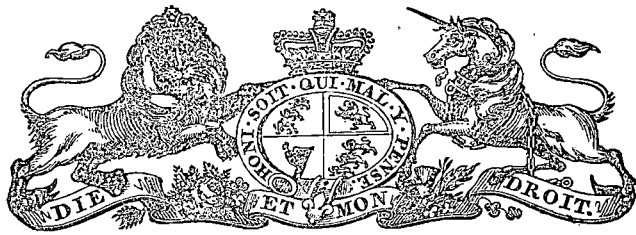


(No. 124.)



1880.

T A S M A N I A .

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y .

KANGAROO POINT AND RISDON FERRIES :

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE, WITH MINUTES
AND EVIDENCE.

Brought up by Mr. Lamb, and ordered by the House to be printed,
October 8, 1880.



SELECT COMMITTEE appointed on the 2nd September, 1880, to enquire into the best mode for increasing the Accommodation for the heavy Traffic crossing the River Derwent between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point and Risdon Ferries, with power to send for Persons and Papers. (Named 9th September.)

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. LEWIS.
MR. MITCHELL.
MR. RISBY.
MR. GUNN.

MR. HODGSON.
MR. CLARK.
MR. LAMB. (*Mover.*)

DAYS OF MEETING.

September 16, 23, 24, 30; October 6, 7, 8.

WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Mr. Gardon Petrie.
Mr. Thomas Jennings.
Mr. James Taylor.

Mr. Superintendent Pedder.
Mr. Charles M'Rorie.
Mr. John Gillon.

R E P O R T.

THE Committee appointed by your Honorable House to enquire into the best mode for increasing the accommodation for the heavy traffic crossing the River Derwent between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point and Risdon Ferries, with power to send for persons and papers, have the honor to report that, having held several sittings, and examined a number of witnesses competent to afford valuable information on the subject, they have arrived at the following Resolutions, which they now respectfully submit for the consideration of your Honorable House:—

1. After examining several witnesses with regard to the working of Risdon Ferry, your Committee consider that, owing to the very small amount of traffic across that Ferry, and from the fact that the Lessee of the Punt is paying a high rent for the right of the Ferryage, and that, unless some aid be extended to him, the Ferry will in all probability be closed to the public, a sum of Fifty Pounds per annum be paid to the Lessee of that Ferry for the year 1881, on condition that the said Lessee be bound by Rules and Regulations to be fixed by the Executive Council. Your Committee desire to point out to your Honorable House that, unless some such aid be extended to the Lessee, the Settlers upon Grass Tree Hill and in the vicinity of Risdon, who are without any other means of crossing the Derwent but by that Ferry, will be practically shut out from sending their produce to market,—a calamity which will also be largely experienced by residents of the Richmond, Sorell, and Clarence Districts. The subsidy suggested by your Committee will hardly be objected to by your Honorable House, when they learn that the cost of warps alone to work the Punt is Fifty Pounds per annum.

With reference to the Kangaroo Point Ferry, your Committee are of opinion that, in order to make its working more efficient and satisfactory to the general public, great changes are necessary. In the first place, as shown in evidence, additional trips are very much required; and your Committee think that the following Time Table will meet all the requirements of the case:—

The Ferry-boat to leave—

<i>Hobart.</i>	<i>Kangaroo Point.</i>
8 A.M.	9 A.M.
9.45 A.M.	10.30 A.M.
11.15 A.M.	11.45 A.M.
12.30 A.M.	2 P.M.
2.45 P.M.	3.15 P.M.
4 P.M.	

and an additional trip from 1st October to 1st April in each year, leaving Kangaroo Point at 6 P.M.

As great complaints are made of the excessive charges for transporting produce, your Committee recommend that the Tariff be reduced as follows; viz.—Wagon and Team, from 8s. 6d. to 5s.; Carts and Drays, from 6s. to 3s.; Four-wheel light Vehicles, to 2s. each way; Two-wheel ditto, 1s. 6d. each way; Horses, unattached to Vehicle, including man in charge, to 1s. each way; Horned Cattle, to 1s.; and Sheep, to 1d. per head.

In consideration of the loss to the Proprietor by the proposed additional trips and reduction of fares, and in view of the increased accommodation to the travelling public that will inevitably be derived by the proposed changes, we would strongly recommend that the subsidy to be paid to the Proprietor be supplemented by an additional £100,—although we desire to place on record that we are opposed to subsidising as a rule.

HENRY LAMB, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, 8th October, 1880.

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE.

No. 1.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb, Mr. Gunn, Mr. Clark, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Risby.

1. Resolution appointing Committee read.
2. Ordered, that the following witnesses be summoned to appear before next Committee meeting:—Captain Taylor, "Twins;" Mr. Robert O'May, Bellerive; Mr. Petrie, Risdon; Mr. Thomas Jennings, New Town Road; Superintendent Pedder, Hobart Town.
3. Committee adjourned to Thursday, 23rd September, at 11 o'clock.

No. 2.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Risby, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Gunn, Mr. Clark.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
2. Mr. Gardon Petrie examined.
3. Mr. Thomas Jennings examined.
4. Mr. Taylor examined.
5. Committee adjourned (1.10) till Friday, 24th, at 11.

No. 3.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Risby, Mr. Hodgson.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
2. Mr. Robert O'May examined.
3. Superintendent Pedder examined.
4. Mr. James Taylor re-examined.
5. Committee adjourned until Wednesday, at 11, to bring up Report.

No. 4.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Risby, Mr. Lewis.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
 2. Mr. Charles M'Rorie examined.
 3. Committee adjourn until to-morrow, at 11.
-

No. 5.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Risby, Mr. Hodgson.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
 2. Letter from Messrs. O'May put in and read.
 3. Mr. John Gillon examined.
 4. Draft Report considered.
 5. Committee adjourned until to-morrow at 11:30.
-

No. 6.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Risby, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Gunn.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
 2. Agreement between the Minister of Lands and Mr. James Taylor submitted for the information of the Committee.
 3. Committee deliberated and adjourned until to-morrow at 11.
-

No. 7.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1880.

Present.—Mr. Lamb (Chairman), Mr. Gunn, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Risby.

1. Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed.
 2. Draft report adopted.
 3. Committee separated.
-

EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1880.

MR. GARDON PETRIE *examined.*

By Mr. Hodgson.—I am lessee of the Risdon Ferry, on a five years' lease, three to run from next January: it is leased from Messrs. Maxwell & Tonkin, the trustees of Cleburne's estate. I am compelled to work the ferry, but not at any fixed hours. The punt, warps, &c. are not in very good repair. I am obliged by my lease to keep them in good repair, they have got out of repair through there being no traffic: there is nothing to support the punt, as all the wood drays are knocked off now, the only time we get support is in the summer. I do not know that there have been any serious complaints of the way I work the ferry. I can't be on both sides of the river at once. I am not aware that drays, &c. have been kept waiting for hours. I have taken them over at 12, 1, 2, and 4 in the night, getting out of my bed to do it at all times. I am aware that Mr. Nichols' and Mr. Burrige's wagons were on the other side for days, about a fortnight ago, waiting to cross. I think it was from Tuesday to the following Monday. It was caused by the warps carrying away so that I could not use the punt.

By Mr. Lamb.—If the warps had been ever so good I could not have crossed, for there was such a fresh on the river as has not been known this twenty years. The warps had been replenished only a few days before: they were all new. I find the warps myself.

The return fare for loaded wagon is 4s.; chaise cart, 3s. return; man and horse, 1s. 6d. each way; two-horse loaded dray of produce, 3s. return; wood dray, 2 horses, 2s. 6d. return; one-horse wood dray, 2s. return; bareback horse, 1s. each way; ordinary passengers, 6d.; cattle, 1s. per head; sheep, 10d. a score, that is before sunset: after hours I charge half fare to strangers but to regular customers no extra charge. I cross anytime during the night for payment. The ferry is really open the whole 24 hours on payment.

The ferry is used chiefly by settlers along the road, those are compelled to use the ferry: there are the Grass Tree Hill Settlers, about 11 farmers in the neighbourhood; it is those farmers who cross the road to Hobart Town. No carts come from Town for wood now, it was stopped some time back. My average receipts are about £9 10s. a month from the ferry. I employ two men besides myself, at a cost of 10s. each wages per week and "find" them. I don't carry on any farming; so I have hardly any other work to employ the men at.

By Mr. Risby.—My agreed rent is £70 a year, but I am not able to pay such a rent. A warp would last about twelve months. Sufficient warps to work the punt for a year would cost £50, and I ought to have two coils in reserve in case of accident. I work it now at my actual loss. So far as the public-house goes I sometimes don't take three halfpence a day. There is no board showing the time table of the ferry: Mr. Jennings took it away, saying he had paid £5 for having it painted. People complain of working the ferry, but they know nothing of what manual labour is in working such a punt. Only yesterday the Richmond teams insisted on facing it, but when we had got a little way they begged and prayed of me to put back, which we did. In inclement weather it is not safe to cross. I have never detained people but twice since I have been there, only the time that the warps carried away.

MR. THOMAS JENNINGS *examined.*

I was formerly lessee of Risdon Ferry, and was so for many years. I paid £170 a year for the punt and house. I leased it at first for two years, and then went on by verbal agreement at the same rate for above 12 years; the last 3 years I paid about £60 per annum in consideration of work I had done to the punts—the reduction was on account of the opening of the Railway and the Sorell Causeway, which took away all the stock sales from Richmond. I kept the punts in repair and found the warps, in addition to my rent. According to the work latterly a warp would last above twelve months, formerly I used to wear out about three sets of warps in two years—a set of warps would cost about £50 to £60. I should say my average takings per month during my last three years were about £5 a week, that is since the Railway started. The cost of working it with two men and myself would be about £1 a week each. I offered to go on at £50 a year, but the Trustees said they could get more. The charges used to be—dray 4s., return; four-horse waggon, 5s.; wood cart and horses, 2s. 6d.; chaise cart; 1s. 6d. each way; man or horse, 1s. 6d.; passengers, 6d. each way. You could always pass a team over some part of the day by waiting for an opportunity, a great deal depends on your warps, it is not safe to cross in all weathers. I have known the "fresh" so strong that you could not pass. I think teams could have been crossed between Tuesday to Monday lately, but of course if there were no warps it could not be done: unless the tide were flowing to counteract the "fresh" it would not be safe to cross at times. I think a person could afford to pay £50 a year for the Ferry at the present time. I know a respectable man who is willing to do it now, and to give security for the rent. Business is very slack now, but the house used to do a good business in the summer, the one helps the other. There are a number of settlers who have no other means of crossing but by that Ferry, about 9 or 10 of them on Grass Tree Hill side. The Tea Tree people are not compelled to use it as they can send by boat.

MR. JAMES TAYLOR *examined.*

I am proprietor of the steam ferry-boat *Kangaroo*: have been working her 17 years between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point. Have received £200 a year subsidy from the Treasury during the last two years. The public have derived much benefit from that subsidy as I now run to time, and the boat is no longer laid up for two or three months in the year. I only make the trips laid down by the Government. The trips are about the same as before the subsidy; the fares have been reduced on produce 1s. 6d. per load, but not any upon stock. Passenger traffic remains the same. Traffic has considerably decreased of late years, owing principally to the Railway, for the Districts of Richmond, Campania, Tea Tree, and Jerusalem were all depending upon the Risdon and Kangaroo Point Ferries for getting over: there was no other outlet, now that is all changed. My receipts come perhaps to about £2 a day. Out of 200 names on the Valuation Roll in Clarence District there are only about 40 left to support the boat. Muddy Plains, Clarence Plains, and Sorell have their water carriage: it is chiefly Cambridge that I get support from. On a rough estimate my receipts are about £12 a week and the expenditure about £20 a week, exclusive of the £200 subsidy. Running a greater number of trips would be an improvement, giving one extra trip, and prolonging others, though when I ran eight trips a day in 1874 I found it fail.

By Mr. Risby.—I do not know that running the trips earlier and later would be any improvement: it is the convenience of settlers that we have to consider because they are the ones to whom we have to look for regular support. I tried the experiment for six years and it failed. Where carriages go over from Hobart Town and require to return at some particular time I make a special trip for them.

By Mr. Lamb.—The hours are now precisely the same as before the subsidy was received; I think an extra mid-day trip with reduced fares would meet the convenience of everybody. The fares are 6s. for 2-horse load of grain, each additional horse, 1s.; waggon, 2 horses, 8s. 6d.; additional horse, 1s. each. There is a letter of mine in the Public Works Department pointing out how the charges could be reduced one-half and run an extra trip a day.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1880.

MR. ROBERT O'MAY *examined.*

I am one of the proprietors of the small river steamers plying between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point, and was for five years engaged on board the "Twins" ferry boat. I am aware that the proprietor of that boat (Mr. Taylor) has been receiving £200 a year subsidy during the last two years so as to enable him to run that steamer. I do not think the public have derived any benefit from the payment of that subsidy, indeed I think it is all the other way. Before Mr. Taylor had the subsidy he would run more frequently than he does now. I think, too, it is very unfair towards us, for as soon as Mr. Taylor got the subsidy he reduced the passenger fares from 6d. to 3d., and children under 12 free. I spoke to the Minister of Lands on this subject before the subsidy was granted, and Mr. Brown said he did not think it would interfere with the passenger traffic at all; but it did, for he also gives the man who runs the *Colleen Bawn* the use of that steamer, fuel, &c., and lets him pocket all that he gets. It enables Mr. Taylor to compete with us in a most unfair manner. I do not believe that increased accommodation is given to the public through Mr. Taylor receiving the subsidy. Before the subsidy we used to have a large grain traffic from Kangaroo Point, but since then we have next to nothing. Mr. Taylor used to charge 2d. a bushel, but now it is down to about 1d., taking it nearly all away from us. To enable him to reduce the charge in that way he enters into an arrangement with the farmers to pass their families over free, and the produce at a reduced fare for a payment of £1 per annum; these arrangements have been made since the subsidy was granted. I am aware that Mr. Taylor agreed to reduce the heavy traffic fares before he received the subsidy. I am not in a position to undertake heavy traffic business at this time. In event of anything happening to the "Twins" I think a suitable steamer could be provided for about £3000,—a boat about 120 feet long, 16 feet beam, and a good flat floor on her, to carry about six loaded vehicles right up the centre, and also suitable for passenger traffic, propelling by twin screw. I think by having the twin screw she would act well in southerly weather; a boat of that description could make 8 or 10 trips a day. The heavy traffic since the subsidy was granted is more than it was some years back, as there are more woodcarts. We never had many Richmond teams. I think the "Twins" is a suitable boat for the traffic if she were put in good order. I know she is overhauled once every six months, and that she receives a certificate from the Marine Board as to her efficiency. If such a boat as I have described were put upon the ferry, I, myself, would come forward and lease her. At a rough calculation I should say that, including the subsidy, the "Twins" now earns about £20 a week: this, of course, is a rough guess. In the same way I should think the expenditure would be about £10 a week; certainly not more. If the new boat to which I have referred were put on the ferry I do not say that I could reduce the heavy traffic fares; not if I had to pay a rent. If I received a subsidy of £200 a year from the Government the fares could be reduced considerably. Supposing the boat to be in good order, I cannot see why the "Twins" should not make nine instead of five trips a day in summer, and six instead of four in winter. She would only burn another ton of wood a day if she ran two more trips; the additional cost throughout the year would not exceed 8s. or 10s. a day. I know for a fact that some of my passengers have crossed by the "Twins" for nothing, they have told me that is the reason they cross with Mr. Taylor, this is since the receipt of the subsidy. I am always willing to give needy people free passages, but those I refer to are well to do people who can afford to pay. Some of these people used to pay me 4s. a month until Mr. Taylor offered to take them for nothing. In event of another boat being put on, arrangement should be made with the Marine Board that the respective boats should occupy the wharf as each one vacated it.

F. PEDDER, *Esq., Superintendent of Police, examined.*

I was for many years connected with the Clarence District. Am aware that Mr. Taylor, of the "Twins" steamer, has been receiving a subsidy from the Government. He received the subsidy on condition that he reduced the fares. The public have derived advantage in that they have secured the boat on the ferry, regular trips, and reduced fares. The trips have been decreased in number, I believe. Prior to the subsidy being granted great inconvenience was experienced through the steamer not running at times, and at others very irregularly; there was no system at all. Heavy traffic sent across in the boat is chiefly from the Cambridge district; others are provided with water carriage, and avail themselves of it. In consequence of the irregularities of the "Twins" many settlers have sent their grain over by O'May's steamers. So far as produce is concerned I do not think an early steamer is required, the carts would get to Hobart Town before the market was open; the majority of the people would prefer a later hour. Hobart Town people seldom require to cross earlier and later than they can do at present; such cases are exceptional. I think the steamer did run at eight, and the Cambridge farmers said it was too early, and the second trip too late. Trips cannot be done under an hour, for a large steamer like that takes some time to get up to the wharf; O'May's handier boats run every hour, and that is not more than sufficient for them. I think the "Twins" is a suitable boat for the ferry, a smaller boat would not be as serviceable; this one is none too large. Very little patronage is being extended to the steamer in regard to produce from portions of Clarence District. The heavy traffic from Richmond was much larger than it is now, they now go by Campania train. I have heard very few complaints with regard to the present trips. If hourly trips were arranged I do not think it would induce any of those who do not use the boat to avail themselves of the concession, as water carriage is so much more convenient and economises time and labour so much. The Cambridge people and a few in Clarence would be the only ones benefited by such an arrangement. I have known as much as £3 or £4 in a trip, perhaps two trips a day, but that would be exceptional, I think, because I have often seen the boat go without any load. I do not think Mr. Taylor could continue the boat if the subsidy were withdrawn, seeing that there is opposition on the ferry. If a new boat were put on I do not think any person could afford to pay a rent for her as it would be such a precarious undertaking.

MR. JAMES TAYLOR, *recalled.*

When I received the subsidy from Government there was no arrangement that the passenger charges should not be interfered with. It is not a fact that I conveyed passengers during last year at half fares. I did not advertise to run at reduced fares. I did at 3*d.* each way. The fares some ten years ago were 6*d.* each way. The passenger fares were reduced previous to getting the subsidy. I am not conveying passengers who are able to pay free of charge, and have not been doing so. I have a large number of contract passengers who pay me so much per annum for conveying their produce at a reduced rate, and their families free. The arrangement was advertised in the Hobart Town *Mercury*. It has now run out, with some few exceptions, and I shall not renew it unless I get 200.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1880.

MR. CHARLES M'RORIE *examined.*

I am a resident of Cambridge, and have been so all my life. I remember when the "Twins" steamer was placed on the ferry. I believe it then worked to the satisfaction of the public. The first trip in the morning at that time was at half-past 8 from Kangaroo Point. I think there were four trips in the morning and three in the afternoon—quite that. The boat subsequently fell into Mr. Askin Morrison's hands, and then again into Mr. Taylor's, and for some time it continued to run satisfactorily. Ultimately it gave very great dissatisfaction, causing great inconvenience, and gradually got from bad to worse. A subsidy was then voted by Parliament to assist Mr. Taylor in running the boat. I think the people have benefited very little indeed by the subsidy beyond the boat being secured on the ferry, and there being fixed times for starting. There was a reduction in fares, but very slight; rather a falling off in the number of trips than any increase. The third trip in the morning has been discontinued to the very great inconvenience of the settlers. I think the best hours for trips would be 9, half-past 10, and 12 o'clock in the morning, and the same trips as at present in the afternoon, with the addition of a later trip to town, say a quarter to 5, all the year round. The last trip in summer time should be as late as 6 o'clock. I have always thought that the best plan would be for the boat to leave Hobart Town early in the morning and Kangaroo Point late at night, remaining moored at Hobart Town all night. I think there is about as much heavy traffic on the road now as some years ago.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1880.

MR. JOHN GILLON *examined.*

I am a resident of Hobart Town, and frequently make use of the "Twins" for conveying stone to Hobart Town. The time that the steamer leaves Hobart Town is most inconvenient: half a day is gone before the teams reach the Quarry, for it is nearly 11 o'clock before they do so, the earliest boat being a quarter to 10. There should be a boat at 8 o'clock, and I feel sure such an arrangement would be the means of increasing the traffic to nearly double the present extent. My horses have now to stand waiting in the stable till a quarter to 10; consequently I can only bring over one load a day instead of two. I cannot for that reason compete with others in town. On each alternate Wednesday, when the steamer leaves at 8 o'clock for Sorell sales, I can bring over two loads a day. I know that many others are similarly inconvenienced. If people want to go to Richmond, Sorell, or other outlying places, it is almost impossible to get back the same day. It can be proved by the number of people who go over on alternate Wednesdays. I think the last trip in summer time from Kangaroo Point should be half-past 5, and in winter 4 or half-past, but still start from Hobart Town at 8 in the morning; and I think those hours would suit the public at large. If more trips were made the trade would increase wonderfully. I do not complain of the fares—only of the inconvenience.

Hobart Town, 28th September, 1880.

SIR,

RESPECTING the question of the most suitable means for transporting Vehicles, &c. between Hobart Town and Kangaroo Point, we beg to submit our opinion that, if a Boat, constructed after the Plans proposed by us, be placed on the Ferry, we could ensure the necessary communication, provided a Subsidy be granted us of £200 per annum, and the following Charges; viz.—Heavy Vehicles, at 1*s.* per wheel; Light Vehicles, at 9*d.* per wheel; and for each Horse, 6*d.*

We remain,

Your obedient Servants,

O'MAY BROTHERS.

The Committee of the Kangaroo Point Ferry.