

(No. 97.)



1878.

TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MERSEY BRIDGE AND PARKHAM ROAD:

PETITIONS FROM DELORAINE.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, and ordered by the House to be printed, October 15, 1878.



To His Excellency FREDERICK ALOYSIUS WELD, Esq., C.M.G.,
Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Tasmania.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Residents of the Municipality of Deloraine.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

1. That the Inhabitants of this District suffer loss and inconvenience through the absence of a Bridge over the River Mersey, near Gad's Hill.
2. That there is a general desire to purchase land west of Gad's Hill, but purchasers are hindered by the danger and uncertainty of the fords.
3. Petitioners therefore pray that Your Excellency may be pleased to cause to be placed on the Estimates a sum not exceeding One thousand Pounds for the purpose of erecting a Bridge over the River Mersey, near Gad's Hill.

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

[Here follow 188 Signatures.]

Petition to His Excellency FREDERICK ALOYSIUS WELD, Esq., C.M.G.,
Governor of Tasmania and its Dependencies.

SHOWETH :

That many of your Petitioners have purchased land from the Government previous to the enactment of the 24th and 28th Sections of "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," which provides that a moiety of the purchase-money is reserved for the purpose of making roads in the locality of the lands sold.

That many of your Petitioners are resident on the lands so purchased, but are entirely cut off, as far as traffic is concerned, from Deloraine, which is our nearest Market, Post Office, and Railway Station, for want of a road.

That the whole of the fine timber and good agricultural land lying in a north and north-easterly direction from Deloraine is at the present time of little commercial value, owing to the difficulty and cost of transit.

That the public estate in the locality referred to will be greatly improved by the opening up of a main road from Deloraine in the direction named, and thereby tapping the large tracts of fine waste Crown Lands in the vicinity of Brady's Plains, Bromby's, and Dry's New Country.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that Your Excellency will be pleased to recommend that a sum of money may be placed on the Estimates for the purpose of clearing and opening such road.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

[Here follow 73 Signatures.]

In continuation of Paper No. 97.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, December 3, 1878, and ordered by the House to be printed.

MEMO.*Lands and Works Office, 19th July, 1878.*

Mr. Surveyor Counsel will be good enough to examine proposed site of a bridge across the River Meander, south of Cheshunt estate, in the County of Westmoreland; and also to examine and report upon the extent and quality of Crown land situate and open for selection to which the proposed bridge will afford means of access,—say five miles east and west of Archer's Sugar Loaf, and south thereof to the Western Tier.

The remuneration will be at the rate of two guineas per diem.

NICHOLAS J. BROWN, *Minister of Lands and Works.*

*Deloraine, 14th October, 1878.***SIR,**

I BEG to forward for your perusal the enclosed letter, under date the 8th inst., from myself to Mr. D. D. Griffin, Superintendent of the Deloraine Police, and his reply thereto, in reference to the desirability of erecting a bridge over the Meander River near Cheshunt, and the probability of getting a road from this district to the Lake Country. I consider this matter of vital importance to my constituents, and am therefore constrained to press its favourable consideration upon your notice. I am of opinion that this portion of my district has strong claims for such consideration, inasmuch as a very large sum (about £7000) has been received by the Government within these last few years by the sale of land in the immediate vicinity of the site selected for the bridge, and not one penny expended in return for this large amount received. I also beg to draw your attention to the increasing trade in split and sawn timber, which is conveyed by the railway from Deloraine to Longford, Perth, Evandale, Launceston, Campbell Town, Ross, and as far down the Main Line as Mona Vale, and desire to impress upon you the importance of fostering this traffic by opening up the large beds of first-class timber in the vicinity of the Bluff. "The splendid Crown land south of Jackey's Creek," mentioned in Mr. Griffin's letter, is effectually closed at present for want of proper means of communication; and I concur in Mr. Griffin's remarks, "that if a bridge was put across the Meander near Cheshunt, and a track cleared from Jackey's Creek to the summit of the Mount, it would be a great boon to the stockowners in this district."

I have, &c.

SAMUEL HENRY.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

(Copy.)

*House of Assembly, 8th October, 1878.***DEAR SIR,**

IN a recent conversation I had with Mr. John Field about the necessity of erecting a Bridge over the Meander, near Cheshunt, and the possibility of finding a track from that neighbourhood whereby stockowners might be enabled to get to and from the Lake Country, he told me he understood that you and Constable Cameron did, on a recent occasion, succeed in reaching the Lakes by way of Jackey's Marsh, or from the back of Cheshunt. As I purpose bringing the matter of bridging the Meander under the notice of the Minister of Lands again this Session, I will take it as a favour if you will, at your earliest convenience, give me the particulars of the journey referred to by Mr. Field.

In your description kindly give me the following particulars:—

The time of the year and object of your journey.

The time taken to reach the table-land from the time you left Cheshunt or Jackey's Marsh.

Did you make the trip on horseback?

Do you think it possible to clear a track which would enable stock to travel to and from the Lake Country?

Do you think it probable that a better track could be found than the one explored by you on the occasion alluded to?

Do you know if any other person has succeeded in getting to the Lakes from that neighbourhood?

In your opinion would the erection of a Bridge over the Meander above Cheshunt open up any beds of good timber or Crown lands fit for settlement?

In addition to the answers to the above Queries I will be glad to receive any other information or particulars which you may think desirable; and will thank you to return this letter to me, under cover, with your reply.

I have, &c.

SAMUEL HENRY.

Mr. D. D. GRIFFIN, *Superintendent of Police, Deloraine.*

(Copy.)

Office of Superintendent of Police, Deloraine, 12th October, 1878.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, in reference to the possibility of finding a track from Cheshunt to the Lake Country *via* Jackey's Marsh.

In reply I beg to inform you that I had occasion in the early part of 1877 to visit the Lake Country in search of stolen sheep, and succeeded in finding a track through from Cheshunt to the Great Lake. I started from Deloraine on the 13th January, and rode as far as Jackey's Marsh, which is, as you are doubtless aware, five miles south east of the site of the intended bridge over the Meander. Here I stayed all night, and on the following morning started on foot with Mr. Warner (who had been through to the Great Lake some time before) as my guide. On leaving Warner's we travelled due south until we reached Warner's Creek; crossing this we entered a dogwood scrub, and after travelling a couple of miles through this we came to a creek, the name of which I do not know, nor have I seen it marked on any of the charts. There being a dense scrub on either side, and the creek nearly dry, we resolved to follow the bed of it. After a short distance we found this rather a difficult task, as the bed of the creek was rocky and the ascent in places very steep. However, after clambering over rocks for about six miles we reached the summit of the mount (six hours after leaving Jackey's Marsh); from thence to the Great Lake, a distance of about eight miles, we passed through open country across barren hills lightly timbered.

I am of opinion that a track might be cut from Warner's Creek to the summit of the mount, which would enable stockowners to take sheep and cattle to and from the Lake Country. Though the ascent may be steep in places, yet I think it would be quite as easy of access as the road from the Mersey to Gad's Hill. I doubt if a better track could be found to the Lakes from Cheshunt than the one we travelled over. But I have heard that Mr. Bakes, of Quamby Bluff, has found a track through to the Great Lake, by keeping on the north side of the Bluff, and crossing over Dry's Ranges, and that this track passes through some beds of splendid timber. However, of this I can say nothing of my own knowledge, as I have never been along the track spoken of by Mr. Bakes. But I may here remark that when on our way to the Lakes we passed through some splendid Crown land south of Jackey's Creek; but as my time was somewhat limited I did not have an opportunity of judging what extent there was of it. In conclusion, I would beg to say that I am of opinion that if a bridge was put across the Meander near Cheshunt, and a track cleared from Jackey's Marsh to the summit of the Mount, it would be a great boon to the stockowners in this district, as it would enable them to take stock through to the Lake Country at all seasons of the year, whereas at present they can only get to and from the Lake Country by way of the old V. D. L. Company's track across the Mersey during the summer months.

I have, &c.

DANIEL D. GRIFFIN, *Superintendent of Police.*

SAMUEL HENRY, *Esq., M.H.A., Hobart Town.*

Lands and Works Office, Hobart Town, 17th October, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, with enclosure, having reference to the desirability of erecting a bridge over the Meander River near Cheshunt, and the probability of getting a road from the Deloraine District to the Lake Country.

In reply, I have to inform you that I regret that the information I have received from the Surveyor, who was specially instructed to report upon the country to which the proposed Bridge would afford more easy access, is such that the Government have not felt justified in submitting to Parliament during this Session a vote for the construction of the Bridge.

The statement made in Mr. Griffin's letter shall, however, have full consideration, and further inquiry will be made.

I have, &c.

NICHOLAS J. BROWN, *Minister of Lands and Works.*

SAMUEL HENRY, *Esq., M.H.A., Davey-street, Hobart Town.*

Davey-street, Hobart Town, 12th August, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to furnish the following report of my recent travels in the vicinity of Archer's Sugarloaf, and also of my inspection of land in the Parishes of Parkham and Malling:—

I arrived at Deloraine on the 25th July, and was detained there until Monday, the 29th, by wet weather and floods, during which time I made all the enquiries I could about the localities to be examined, and hired a horse to ride through the country where practicable, by way of saving time, as the greater portion of the work could as well be done on horseback as on foot. Leaving Deloraine on Monday, I rode up along the east bank of the Meander River as far as Callaghan's Ford, where I crossed and went down to Cheshunt Park homestead, so as to get Mr. Bowman to point out the proposed site for a bridge across the Meander River. In the afternoon Mr. Bowman went out with me in a southerly direction across the western portion of lot in the name of T. Archer on to Lot 6326A, crossed same and also Lot 6326 in a south-easterly direction. Both of these lots are of gravelly poor soil growing a considerable quantity of stringy-bark with an occasional gum tree, and low scrub in places, principally wirewood. Thence we crossed W. C. Bowman's section as shown by a dotted line on the accompanying plan, and on through Lot 6328 up to B. Proverb's section. I may mention that Mr. Bowman has the run of Lots 6327A, 6327, 6328, and 6329 without paying any rent to the Government for the land. Mr. B. Proverb has occupied his land for about five years, and has only cleared about six acres,—the clearing being very heavy. Going on again, we passed over land applied for by H. Gunnion, crossed two small streams, (between which the land is of good quality), and returned to Cheshunt by way of Proverb's Ford, inspecting the proposed site for bridge across the Meander River *en route*.

After looking up and down the river for some distance, I decided that the best site for a bridge was about ten chains below where the road is marked to the river: the banks are sound and good, and the length of the bridge required about two and a quarter chains, to make it a permanent work; this would necessitate a slight alteration in the road, which, however, would be rather an improvement than otherwise as it would cut off a sharp turn and be on quite as firm land as the present line. Starting early on Wednesday morning and going on a southerly bearing, very poor stony land is travelled over after leaving Bowman's estate until J. Chellis' section is reached, when good dogwood scrub land is met with, extending through the greater portion of H. Stagg's land, with a slight exception, being a small sandstone rise. From the back portion of Stagg's lot southwards, as far as I went, the land is for the most part stony, scrubby, and heavily timbered, all but a few acres near the junction of the Huntsman's Rivulet with the Meander: still, if cleared, it would all grow grass reasonably well. At present there is a little native grass in places, but of a poor kind. After going about one and a half miles to the south of Williams's selection I thought it unnecessary to go any farther, as there was no indication of good land, as far as I could see and judge by the appearance of the timber and formation of the country, and accordingly I returned, making a detour round the lower part of the Huntsman's Rivulet, and observing that the land was of an inferior kind on the opposite side of the Meander and very scrubby on the way.

Going back through Stagg's and J. Chellis' blocks of land, I struck across land applied for by H. Grimmon on to J. Jordan's north boundary, and followed it along to the N.W. angle and thence went west for about half a mile, the land on either side being of a rich chocolate kind most of the way. As the foot of a high hill called Cummings' Head was not far off in the direction I had been travelling, I altered the course to south west, on which bearing the land is good and fairly level for about a quarter of a mile, when it changes into medium quality and rises gradually for the next quarter of a mile; thence it grows steep more rapidly, and mica schist appears on the surface in places, while altered sandstone crops up occasionally, the land getting poorer as the hill is ascended; the rise for the last ten chains is about three hundred and fifty feet. As I had got out of the good land by this time I thought it advisable to retrace my steps for about three-quarters of a mile, and strike south, when after going a short distance I found I was again ascending a spur of the tier; so altered my bearing towards the east, keeping round the lower part of the range, at the same time not leaving any suitable land for selection on my right hand. After going for some time over land of a passable kind, but broken by two creeks and a narrow gully, I got on to the Huntsman's

Rivulet watershed ; and as I had been walking over hilly myrtle land for the most of the way since crossing the last creek, I thought that it was unnecessary to go farther in that direction, and so concluded my inspection of the country west of the Meander in the locality of Archer's Sugar Loaf, coming out through Williams's land, quite satisfied that the only good land worth mentioning in that vicinity open for selection was a narrow piece west of Jordan's and Ritter's lots, and round the south and west lines of one hundred acres applied for by W. Lee,—in all I would say not more than three hundred acres. The scrub is very dense on all the good soil, the principal kinds being dogwood, musk, sassafras, and myrtle, with stringy-bark timber and an occasional gum tree, with a few blackwood trees in places ; but the latter are only small, while few of the former appear to be of a good splitting kind. The geological formation, as far as I went south of Huntsman's Rivulet, is greenstone, while sandstone crops out in places on the west of Archer's Sugar Loaf ; and from Mr. Bowman's land there is a poor stony ridge leading up to the Sugar Loaf carrying ironstone, gravel, and boulders all the way.

On Thursday morning I made an early start and got up to Jackey's Marsh in good time from Mr. Bowman's, where I stayed the two previous nights. As the scrub was too dense to ride through, I left my horse at Mr. Warner's and engaged him to go out with me as he was pretty well acquainted with parts I was desirous of examining. Starting from Warner's south line and going in a south-westerly direction we crossed three creeks coming down from the Western Tier, and running towards the Meander River, the land being good on this bearing for about two miles east and partly south east of a high rocky hill, standing between Warner's land and the Meander and the Western Tier. Before coming to the last creek I steered easterly from my course to ascertain the width of the piece of good land, but soon got into bad stringy-bark land, showing quartz gravel on the surface ; this I could see was a spur leading up to the tier. After crossing the third creek the soil changed into poor stony rough country, which continues, I believe, back for miles, the principal scrub being wire-wood, which, by the way, is an indication of bad land.

As Archer's Sugar-loaf was now bearing N. five degrees E., and feeling satisfied I was out of the passable good land in that direction even for pastoral occupation, I started back for Warner's farm, and on the way followed the last creek down some distance and then struck across in a northerly direction over the second creek, after which stony land was met with, and walked over on to Warner's cleared land, being the beginning of the hill referred to above. The land is open after crossing the creek to Warner's section.

I believe the extent of land in this flat which is of good quality to be about 600 acres, being estimated at about two miles in length by half a mile in width. This area being low lying and well watered possesses many advantages for grazing purposes. The principal kinds of scrub are dogwood and musk, and the large timber is gum and stringy bark. Passing over Warner's 320 acres across Jackey's Creek the land near the stream is of excellent quality. After travelling a short distance we struck out from the creek and soon came on to a stringy-bark spur of poor soil. Continuing up the stream the land is of inferior heavily-timbered kind, except a narrow flat along the creek for about a mile and a half. I thought it better now to cross the creek and travel up some distance on the opposite side, and accordingly did so. After going about half a mile farther the good land appeared to pinch out on this side ; and as it was not a great distance to the foot of a ridge running from Quamby's Bluff across to the tier, partly in the direction of Dry's Bluff from where I had reached, and seeing no indication of good land out from the creek, I deemed it unnecessary to proceed farther, so returned by way of Cummings' land. I think that a hundred acre lot of good land could be got on the north side of the creek east and adjoining C. O'Keefe's 155 acres ; this would take in all the good land on the same side of the creek, with the exception of the narrow flat along the stream, which is only a few chains wide. In all, I believe, there is not more than two hundred acres of good land available for selection in this locality, which is scrubby and heavily timbered, though not of a profitable kind for splitting purposes, as far as I went. My next move was down and across Jackey's Creek over a pretty high hill to land purchased by Mr. A. Poole, to see what the country was like between his lot of land and Quamby's Bluff. Going north east from Poole's section across Tyler's fifty acres, and across the south-east corner of J. E. Retter's lot, continuing in a north-easterly direction for about half a mile further, land of medium quality, but broken by a deep creek, is passed over. I now thought it advisable to go southerly up a valley of dogwood land for some distance, but met with little suitable land for agricultural occupation, being very stony and steep in places. This valley of heavily timbered scrub land, I believe, runs round the foot of Quamby's Bluff on the west side into Jackey's Creek, about where one hundred acres are applied for by C. O'Keefe, but owing to its situation and steepness is of comparatively little value, being situated between Quamby's Bluff and high hill which I sketched on plan. There are about one hundred acres of land to the south east of Tyler's selection that I believe could be profitably worked. There being nothing more to inspect in this locality, I went out through W. Archer's 640 acres across Hall's, Bonney's, and Garrett's sections of land on to the main road to Deloraine, where I arrived on Friday evening, the 2nd August, and received instructions to inspect some land in the Parish of Parkham, to be pointed out to me by Mr. Surveyor Smith. After enquiry at Mr. Smith's residence I was told that he would likely return on Saturday from work at which he was engaged along the road to Latrobe. Failing to get any one acquainted with the country to be inspected to go with me, I started on my own account, and went north-westerly from Deloraine

along land purchased by James Winter, M. French, and others, on to Everett's farm; thence Crown land is crossed for a short distance of a stony indifferent kind. Continuing on through Cranican's lot, and crossing Charleswood's and O'Bryan's sections, I struck north-westerly for some distance and found the scrub very thick, the principal kinds being dogwood and cabbagewood, and the land stony, but of good quality. As it was now late in the afternoon I made back for Deloraine, getting in shortly after dark, where I expected to see Mr. Smith, who, however, had not put in an appearance, but turned up on Sunday.

On Monday we rode down on the west side of the Meander, through Lot 3802, Symmons and Bloomfield's lots, and on along a grant to T. Walker past Sullivan's section on to Crown land, and struck north-westerly for about half a mile over indifferent stony land. This brought me into a large flat of heavily timbered stringy-bark land. The scrub is light, but thick in places, the principal kind being tea-tree, with high ferns. Much of this land is sufficiently open to travel over on horseback. The land, generally speaking, is of a light colour and not suitable for agricultural operations, but would make good dairy farms if cleared and sown with grass, being low-lying land and well watered. After travelling over this flat in various directions, and being told by Mr. Smith, who is well acquainted with the district, that I had seen a fair sample of the land, I thought there was no occasion to lose more time going out in that locality, more particularly as the country was too rough to get through on horseback. I would estimate the area of this flat of land at two thousand acres, judging from my riding over the south-eastern portion of it, and from the appearance of the surrounding hills, which are of bad gravelly soil. The cart track already in use by the settlers of this locality to Deloraine with a few alterations could be made a good road at comparatively small expense, there being no hill of any account the whole of the way, and much of the land being naturally adapted to road-making. After going out to where W. Smith has purchased fifty acres of land I went north east for about three-quarters of a mile over poor stringy-bark land, which continues east some distance, and is very stony in places, while to the south west round W. Smith's lot it is heavily timbered dogwood scrub land along the side of the hill. About three-quarters of a mile further, bearing N.N.W. down a rather steep stony hill of poor soil, brought me to within a short distance of where I had been the previous day; thence north for a mile poor land is gone over. I now altered my course to south west and travelled over bad swampy land for nearly a mile, after which I observed a little ironstone gravel on the surface and the land getting drier and slightly improved, but was still of an inferior pastoral quality, on to land purchased by Mr. Joseph Carr; continuing on to the main road leading from Deloraine to Latrobe, where Mr. William Walker has purchased some lots of land, nothing but bad stony gravelly soil is passed over, with the exception of the lots already purchased.

The country travelled over in the parishes of Parkham and Malling is of basaltic formation. Much timber has been split in the neighbourhood of Mr. Smith's selection; but I have seen no extent of good splitting timber untouched in the district.

I forward a plan herewith showing the different areas of good land as estimated by me, the same being coloured yellow. The plan will convey other information to the Department which, I trust, you will find satisfactory as to the formation of the country.

I have, &c.

E. A. COUNSEL, *Surveyor.*

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.