

(No. 29.)



1866.

T A S M A N I A .

O Y S T E R C O V E T R A M W A Y .

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E .

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, 14 August, 1866.



(Copy.)

1, Albert Terrace, 9th June, 1866.

SIR,

I BEG leave to offer for sale to your Government a Tramway and Jetty constructed by me at Little Oyster Cove, believing that by its conversion into a public road the greatest convenience will result to residents in that locality. The Jetty extends 150 feet into the bay, and has a depth of water of 20 feet, at which vessels in all weathers can load. The Tram is continued to the end of the Jetty.

The Tramroad runs from the sea inland about $3\frac{1}{4}$ (three and a quarter) miles terminating within a few hundred yards of an extensive block of crown land, which for timber and agricultural purposes is not surpassed, if equalled, by any in the possession of the Government.

The greater part of the Tramway has recently been *relaid and slabbed*, with the exception of a small portion of the original construction, a short time since, (March last), in part injured by fire. The curves are *all plated with iron*, and the viaducts built of solid logs, (pig-stye fashion), surmounted with three longitudinal spars, upon which the sleepers and slabs are laid. This Tramroad was first constructed in 1857, and shortly after was destroyed by fire, all the bridges (5 in number) and viaducts having been swept away. Should your Government think favourably of the offer now made, the price will be Two thousand (2000) pounds, payable by long dated Debentures at par, or if preferred, one half in land now held by me under the pre-emptive and credit clauses of *The Waste Lands Act*, and the other by Debentures.

It may not be out of place to say this Tramroad is the *natural outlet* of a very large extent of country, and would, if opened to the public, immediately give employment to a number of industrious people.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Yours most obediently,

WILLIAM LODK. CROWTHER.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer.

THE Commissioner of Crown Lands is requested to obtain Mr. Laffer's report on the timber and land that would be available to the public through the acquisition of the Tramway.

C. MEREDITH.
11th June, 1866.

MEMO.

WILL Mr. Laffer oblige by carrying out as early as possible the Hon. Treasurer's instructions? And I think that in addition thereto he should make it his business to ascertain the present condition and value of the Tramway, $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles long, which it is proposed to sell to the Government for £2000, being at the rate of about £615 a mile (Jetty included), that the Government (should it decide on the purchase) may not have to pay too long a price for what may prove inferior articles. With his extensive experience in all matters connected with the timber trade of the Colony, he should also report whether it would be a desirable purchase to make just now when the demand for our manufactured woods is so much on the decline as at present, a trade from which Dr. Crowther has himself

prudently withdrawn. My own personal knowledge of the country about the western terminus of the Tramway enables me to say that I do not believe the fine crown land referred to by Dr. Crowther (which I own quite escaped my observation when travelling from Oyster Cove to Port Cygnet) can ever be reached by any continuation of the line proposed to be sold; and this line is, therefore, of no use to the Government on this account. The whole country hereabouts rises so suddenly and too abruptly to induce the belief that its future traffic, whatever that may prove to be, can be drained by Dr. Crowther's road.

J. E. CALDER.
12 June, 1866.

MEMO.

THERE is good land and timber in the locality indicated by Dr. Crowther, but of what extent I am not prepared to say, although, from the character of the country in its immediate vicinity being so very hilly, I doubt if it is of large area. I have examined the Tramroad, and found that some portions of it require renewing, others will very soon want repairing; but even if it were all in working order, I cannot but think the sum required to be very much above its value. I believe about one-half would be much nearer; but it is my opinion that it can never be made available for the land referred to, in consequence of a steep hill, like a basin between, which cannot be avoided, and I believe cannot be surmounted by a Tram keeping the proper gradients, unless at a very great expense indeed, if even then. With respect as to whether it would be a desirable purchase or otherwise in the present depressed state of the timber trade, I believe it admits of great doubt whether a Tramroad acquired under the most favourable circumstances, and in the *most favored locality*, would prove a desirable speculation, in neither of which positions can the Tram referred to be considered.

J. LAFFER,
25 June, 1866.

(Copy.)

MR. LAFFER'S Report on the proposal of Dr. Crowther to sell his Tramroad at Little Oyster Cove to the Government is within. Mr. Laffer is of opinion that the sum asked for it, £2000, for three and a quarter miles, is very excessive: indeed, it appears that the structure said by Dr. Crowther to be in such good repair is not even in working order.

My own knowledge of the country hereabouts inclines me to join in the opinion of Mr. Laffer that public interests will not be benefited by its acquisition.

J. E. CALDER,
25 June, 1866.

(Copy.)

Treasury, 27th June, 1866.

SIR,

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, offering to sell to the Government a Tramway and Jetty constructed by you at Little Oyster Cove. I have now to acquaint you that from such information as I have been able to procure, and which only reached me yesterday, it appears that good land and timber are to be found in the locality you indicate, but, from the character of the country, the area of the good land is not supposed to be extensive, and, in consequence of a steep hill, can never be available by your Tramroad. It further appears that your Tramroad is not in working order, some portions already require renewing, and others will very soon want repairing; but even were it in working order, looking at the gradients, I cannot but think the price asked, about £615 a mile, to be very much above its value. Therefore, because your Tramroad would not render the Crown Land available, is out of repair, and the price altogether too high, the Government decline to purchase it,—and without the Tramroad the Jetty would not be required.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

CHARLES MEREDITH.

W. L. CROWTHER, Esq.

(Copy.)

1, *Albert Terrace*, 28th June, 1866.

SIR,

I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, in which you decline to purchase the Tramroad and Jetty at Little Oyster Cove, offered by me to your Government on the 9th instant; the reasons assigned being as follows,—

- 1st. The Tramroad would not render the Crown Land available.
- 2nd. It is out of repair, and the price too high.

To these objections I will simply reply, and trust the explanation afforded will enable the Government to reconsider my offer.

In the first place I am prepared to prove the Crown Land would be available, the produce passing along "the Bunk Road" to my Tramroad.

That, in the event of "the Bunk Road" not proving sufficient, the Tramroad can be extended, by an easy gradient, a distance of a quarter of a mile into Crown Land. That the area of Crown Land is extensive, and were the Tramroad opened in connection with "the Bunk Road," employment would at once be given to a large number of industrious people.

In selling the Tramroad I include "the Bunk Road," private property, the only means of access to the Crown Land. For some years the Tramroad will not require to be extended, as the "Bunk Road" will give occupation to a large number of teams, is in good repair, and runs into the heart of the timber country. Before disposing of the Tramroad, it was my intention, and is now, to make good any defective parts, the greater portion having recently been relaid, and until the fire of March last was in excellent working order.

The trucks, two in number, are substantial and in good order, and capable of removing at each load two thousand palings.

With regard to the price being too high, I beg to say, with the ample Jetty accommodation offered (150 feet), the surrender of a private road (Bunk), and upwards of three miles of Tramroad substantially built, with clearances effected around the bridges and viaducts to protect them from fire, the sum asked is a fair one, and much below the actual cost.

At the present time nearly all the teams at Little Oyster Cove are idle, and there is not a single person employed upon the Crown Land referred to. Were the tram and Bunk Roads opened, within one month, I am warranted in saying, one hundred and fifty people would be located there. From information received yesterday, I hear that the residents at Little Oyster Cove have petitioned your Government with regard to the taking over the Tramroad, being fully aware that in the event of this being done mutual prosperity would again return to that locality, and labour be provided for a large body of individuals who for months past have not been able to obtain the means necessary to the maintenance of themselves and families.

I have the honor to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM LODK. CROWTHER.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer.

(Copy.)

Treasury, 29th June, 1866.

SIR,

In acknowledging your letter of the 28th inst., which I will lay before my Colleagues when they are all in Hobart, I desire to say that I do not exactly understand what is meant by a "Bunk Road," and that if you have a "Tracing" it will probably show the relative position of the Tramroad and "Bunk Road."

I have the honor, &c.,

(Signed) C. MEREDITH.

W. L. CROWTHER, *Esq.*

(Copy.)

Port Cygnet, 11th July, 1866.

SIR,

I PERCEIVE that Dr. Crowther is bringing strong influence to bear for the purpose of inducing the Government to purchase his Tram and Bunk Roads.

I enclose you a letter written by that gentleman, and addressed to Mr. Flight, of Oyster Cove (whose permission I have to make use of it in any way), urging to get a Petition forwarded to the Governor from the inhabitants. I also send you a copy of another petition or letter, now in course of signature, addressed to Mr. Perkins, requesting the Honorable Member to use his influence in the matter, and which I am assured was written by Dr. Crowther's nephew, Mr. Blythe, who resides on that gentleman's property at Oyster Cove. I believe it to be my duty to give you all the information in my power, as I consider such pressure anything but legitimate, when it is borne in mind that Dr. Crowther has for so long a period denied to the inhabitants of that locality all access to the Crown land at the back, by stopping up a road passing through but a short distance of his bush land, which had been considered and used as a public one for so many years previously, and which act you will observe is spoken of in the letter to Mr. Perkins as to almost cause starvation to the inhabitants.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,
J. LAFFER.

(Copy.)

1, Albert Terrace, 9th June, 1866.

DEAR SIR,

THE thought has occurred to me that great benefit would accrue to the public at present located at Little Oyster Cove, as well as to myself, were I to dispose of to the Government my Tramroad,—more particularly as by this means the Country at the back would be settled and opened up. *I have made the offer*, and think it would be advisable for the inhabitants at once to petition for the purpose, setting forth the fact that the natural outlet from the timber country is through my property. I believe if this were made a public road prosperity would again return to the Bay, and full employment given to all parties located there. Perhaps the best means to adopt would be to call a meeting at the School-house, and forward the result to the Government.

Believe me,
Yours very truly,

WILLIAM LODK. CROWTHER.

Mr. THOMAS FLIGHT.

(Copy.)

*Little Oyster Cove, 6th July, 1866.**The Hon. J. PERKINS, Esq., M.H.A.*

WE, the undersigned inhabitants of Oyster Cove, having presented our Petition to the Government to beg that they will purchase the Tramroad and Bunk Road from Dr. Crowther, respectfully request that, in the ensuing sitting of Parliament, you will make enquiry and press the matter in our behalf, as it is absolutely necessary for us to have a road through to the timber at the back. Since the right of road through Dr. Crowther's ground has been stopped, we have been unable to get sufficient timber from the back to maintain ourselves and families; and we therefore beg that you will interest yourself for this part of your District, as mentioned in the beginning of this letter.

(14 Names attached.)

(Copy.)

IN compliance with the Surveyor-General's request that I should put in writing what Dr. Crowther stated to me about three weeks ago respecting his Tramroad at Oyster Cove, and which I mentioned to Mr. Calder at the time, I beg to state that I met Dr. Crowther in Liverpool-street, when he told me that he had offered to sell his Tramroad to the Government for £2000; that it was the only means of access to the crown land in the rear of his property, where there was a large quantity of excellent timber, which he thought it right to name to me, as his offer would very likely be referred to the Survey Office. He further stated, that he was never more surprised in his life

than when he was told by Luttrell that a Petition had been got up by the inhabitants of Oyster Cove praying the Government to purchase the Tramway, and that he knew nothing about it until he was informed that it had been sent in.

E. W. BOOTHMAN.

Survey Office, 17th July, 1866.

(Copy.)

Colonial Treasury, 1st August, 1866.

SIR,

IN reply to your letter of the 28th of June last, in which you ask to have the offer of your Tramroad to the Government reconsidered, I have the honor to acquaint you that, after careful consideration, the Government do not feel disposed to interfere with their former decision.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

C. MEREDITH.

W. L. CROWTHER, *Esq.*

To His Excellency T. GORE BROWNE, Governor-in-Chief, and Parliament of Tasmania.

WE, the undersigned Inhabitants of Oyster Cove, beg to present our humble Petition, as follows:—

Whereas for some time past, notwithstanding all our exertions, this place has been deteriorating, and labour and trade almost stagnated, in consequence of having no road to get our timber from the back country. We therefore pray that the Government may be induced to take some steps for purchasing the Tramroad belonging to Dr. Crowther, and also a right of road, as that is the proper outlet to the back country, and would open out fresh beds of timber, and thereby enable us to gain a livelihood for ourselves and families.

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

James Flight.
George Turner.
John Waldie.
Henry Hillman.
William Russell.
Sinclair Keith Davie.
John Spurr.
David Russell.
John Russell.
William Burns.
Robt. Lockley.
Charles Holloway.
F. Atkinson.
James Allen.

Alexander Sculthorp.
Sinclair Davie, junr.
Robert Oxley.
John Sculthorp.
George Howison.
Charles Furnell.
John Dunn.
George Warner.
Henry Furnell.
George Bradley.
John Mathers.
William Smith.
James Moore.
James Caton.

George R. Smith.
William Luttrell.
Henry Best.
Alfred Hughes.
Andrew Brown.
George Bates.
George Langley.
James H. Watt.
James Lever.
William Madden.
William Cole.
Thomas Trotter.
Thomas Holmes.
Thomas Chance.

THIS is a copy of a Petition, but before laying on Executive Council table for the consideration of His Excellency, I wish the Surveyor-General to procure the addresses of the persons whose signatures are attached, in order that it may be seen how far they are locally interested.

C. MEREDITH.

27th June, 1866.

REFERRED to Mr. Laffer, who will be kind enough to carry out the Colonial Treasurer's wishes as speedily as he can.

J. E. CALDER.

5 July, 1866.

I BEG to return the enclosed with the information required by the Hon. the Treasurer, placed opposite to each name on this copy of the Petition.

J. LAFFER.

11 July, 1866.

James Flight, Landowner and Publican, Little Oyster Cove.
 George Turner, Landowner, Trial Bay.
 John Waldie, Land Occupier, Great Oyster Cove.
 Henry Hillman, ditto, Little Oyster Cove.
 William Russell, Splitter, ditto.
 Sinclair Keith Davie, ditto, ditto.
 R. M. Spurr, Schoolmaster, ditto.
 David Russell, Splitter, ditto.
 John Russell, ditto, ditto.
 William Burns, ditto, ditto.
 Robert Lockley, Land Occupier, ditto.
 Charles Holloway, ditto, ditto.
 F. Atkinson, Labourer, Trial Bay.
 James Allen, ditto, Little Oyster Cove.
 Alexander Sculthorpe, Occupier & Shoemaker, ditto.
 Sinclair Davie, junr., Landowner, ditto.
 Robert Oxley, Sawyer, Great Oyster Cove.
 John Sculthorp, Waterman, Little Oyster Cove.
 George Howison, Labourer, ditto.
 Charles Farnell, Carter, ditto.
 John Dunn, Blacksmith, ditto.
 George Warner, Landowner, ditto.

Henry Farnell, Labourer, Little Oyster Cove.
 George Bradley, ditto, Great Oyster Cove.
 John Mathers, Occupier and Splitter, Little Oyster Cove.
 William Smith, Labourer, ditto.
 James Moore, ditto, ditto.
 James Caton, Splitter, ditto.
 George R. Smith, Landowner, Great Oyster Cove
 William Luttrell, *Maggie Laurie* Yacht.
 Henry Best, Splitter, Great Oyster Cove.
 Alfred Hughes, Land Occupier, ditto.
 Andrew Brown, Cutter *Australia*.
 George Bates, Land Occupier, Perch Bay.
 George Langley, ditto, Trial Bay.
 James H. Watt, Landowner, Little Oyster Cove.
 James Lever, Labourer, Trial Bay.
 William Madden, Land Occupier, ditto.
 William Cole, Occupier and Sawyer, Great Oyster Cove.
 Thomas Trotter, Sawyer, ditto.
 Thomas Holmes, Land Occupier, Little Oyster Cove.
 Thomas Chance, Schooner *Luci's All*.

REFERRED to the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer. Mr. Laffer has obtained all the information required of him, and forwards a letter from Dr. Crowther to Mr. Flight (with the concurrence of Mr. Flight), which goes to show that the movement lately made towards purchasing his Tramroad originated with himself (Dr. C.).

J. E. CALDER.

16 July, 1866.

SUBMITTED that, for the reasons set forth in my letter to Dr. Crowther of the 27th June, the Petitioners be informed that their prayer cannot be granted.

CHAS. MEREDITH.

23rd July, 1866.

T. G. B.

THE Governor in Council approves,

E. C. NOWELL.

23rd July, 1866.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer.