

(No. 90.)



1879.

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T A S M A N I A.

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

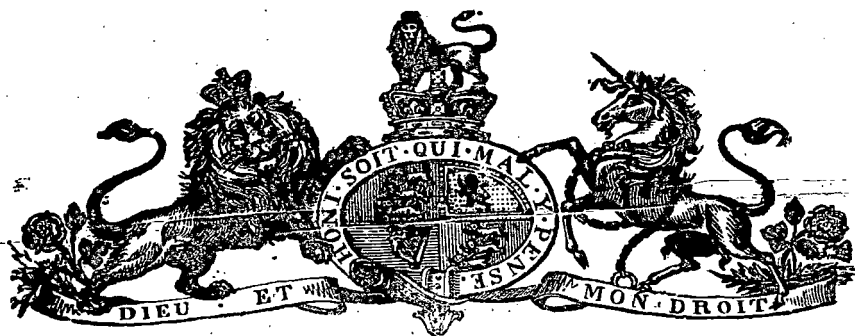
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S H E F F I E L D   R O A D :

R E P O R T O F S E L E C T C O M M I T T E E , W I T H M I N U T E S O F  
P R O C E E D I N G S A N D E V I D E N C E .

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Brought up by Mr. Braddon, and ordered by the House to be printed, January  
29, 1880.



*SELECT Committee appointed on the 25th September, 1879, to enquire into the expenditure of money (£1500) voted for the Sheffield and Barrington Road northwards towards Latrobe, and into the reasons and causes for diverting the expenditure of the money so voted to other localities.*

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

MR. WHITEHEAD.  
MR. GELLIBRAND.  
MR. HENRY.

MR. DOUGLAS.  
MR. BRADDON (*Mover*).

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DAYS OF MEETING.

Thursday, 29th October, 1879.

Friday, 16th January, 1880.

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WITNESSES EXAMINED.

James Fincham, Esq., C.E., Engineer-in-Chief.  
Mr. William Smith, Chief Clerk Public Works.  
The Hon. N. J. Brown, (late Minister of Lands and Works).

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R E P O R T.

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Your Committee have the honor to make the following Report.

A sum of £1500 was voted for the Kentishbury and Barrington Road, and the difference of opinion that has arisen as to the application of this sum is the consequence of the indefiniteness of the wording "Kentishbury and Barrington." Kentishbury and Barrington are two Districts that adjoin. The £1500 have been expended upon roads within the limits of these Districts, although not upon the continuous piece of road for which Barrington claimed it. The evidence taken by your Committee shows that the Minister of Lands of the day applied the vote in what he considered the most advantageous manner, and in the way best calculated to satisfy conflicting interests. The greater part of the money was expended upon the worst portion of the road between Barrington and Sheffield, the remainder upon a mile of road commencing from the south-east end of Sheffield towards Railton.

Had the vote been for the Sheffield and Barrington Road the wording would have been precise, and no divergence of opinion could have arisen as to the road for which it was intended; but Kentishbury is a large district, whereof Sheffield is the township, and it is impossible to question the fact that the vote was all spent within Kentishbury or Barrington.

Difficulties of this sort might, in the opinion of the Committee, be precluded in future by every vote being made in clear and unquestionably definite terms.

E. BRADDON, *Chairman*.

Committee Room, 20th January, 1880.

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No. 1.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1879.

*Present*—Mr. Braddon, Mr. Henry, Mr. Gellibrand.

1. Appointment of Committee (V. & P. No. 6) read.
2. James Fincham, Esq., Engineer-in-Chief, and Mr. William Smith, Chief Clerk Public Works Department, attended the Committee.
3. Mr. Fincham examined.
4. Mr. W. Smith, Chief Clerk Public Works, examined.
5. Committee adjourned.

No. 2.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1880.

*Present*—Mr. Braddon (Chairman), Mr. Henry, Mr. Gellibrand.

Hon. N. J. Brown, late Minister of Lands and Works, examined.

No. 3.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1880.

*Present*—Mr. Braddon (Chairman), Mr. Gellibrand, Mr. Henry.

Report adopted.

## EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 29TH OCTOBER, 1879.

JAMES FINCHAM, Esq., C.E., Engineer-in-Chief, stated—

My first step was to obtain the general direction of the traffic from the settled part of Barrington; and I found that this led through Sheffield Township to the Mersey and Deloraine Tramway at Railton Station, and that the portion of road principally west of Sheffield was in a very bad and dangerous condition. On that I instructed the District Inspector, Mr. Creswell, to take particulars of the most urgent works. He reported that, in his opinion, the most urgent work lay between the Don River and the north-east boundary of Sheffield, and prepared contract accordingly (as shown by yellow marks on plan put in). Tenders were received for this work, which was never carried out owing to the representations of a party of settlers from both Kentishbury and Barrington, who waited upon the late Minister of Lands (Mr. Brown) while visiting Latrobe in May, 1878. He agreed to meet them on the spot, and did so with myself a day or two afterwards. The result of that was that I recommended him to authorise the transfer of the bulk of the expenditure to the west side of the River Don, and to construct a very necessary bridge over the River Don. The works have since been let, and carried out in accordance with that recommendation,—about three-fourths of the Vote being expended from the River Don westwards, and about one-fourth on a very bad portion of road east of the Police Station at Sheffield. I have only further to add that the respective Chairmen of the Road Trusts were, I am informed, consulted by the District Inspector at the time the work was laid out.

*By Mr. Henry.*—Has any portion of the sum of £1500 been expended *not* in accordance with the Vote of Parliament? Not as far as I am aware.

But I understood you to say you first of all endeavoured to ascertain the course of traffic? Yes: I always thought, from the way in which the Vote was worded, that the Kentishbury people had as much right to it as the inhabitants of Barrington. If it had been Sheffield and Barrington it would have been altogether different.

*By Mr. Gellibrand.*—Did the two Road Trusts agree to the expenditure of money in this form? No: as each party wanted the bulk of the money, the present expenditure was adopted after consultation with settlers and the Chairmen of the Road Trusts; and the views of all were fairly consulted, to the limit of the means under the Vote; and I am of opinion it has been fairly expended for the benefit of all, and with the approval of the then Minister of Lands. I considered I stood as a kind of umpire between the parties, and settled fairly and justly according to the best of my judgment, after special and careful consideration.

*By Mr. Henry.*—Would the interests have been as well served if the moneys had been expended more west? I think not.

How was the Kentishbury portion of the money expended? From the centre to the boundary of the Township of Sheffield where it meets the Railton Road.

MR. WM. SMITH, Chief Clerk, Public Works:

Produced advertisements and tenders referring to the work.

*By the Chairman.*—Will you state what information you can afford the Committee? I am unable to give any other than that the specifications were prepared, tenders invited, the lowest tender accepted, and contract entered into in the usual form.

Witness withdrew.

FRIDAY, 16TH JANUARY, 1880.

HON. N. J. BROWN *examined, stated as follows:—*

The vote for the work which is now under consideration was worded "Kentishbury and Barrington Road," as shown on the plan. The first work laid out under the vote, so far as my memory serves me, was the portion marked yellow, from the east of the River Don to the north-west side of Sheffield. The work which was undertaken was proposed and recommended because the greater part of the Barrington traffic went to Railton. Traffic was prevented from going northwards to Tarleton by the bad state of the road further North. The money voted was wholly inadequate to make the north road passable. It would have taken £5000 or £6000 to give settlers an outlet northwards. I therefore thought that the interests of the Barrington people would be better consulted by improving the already existing means of communication with Railton, and therefore the portion marked red, east of the Don, in the township of Sheffield towards Railton, was constructed in accordance with that view. Tenders were called for the work east of the River Don; but I think before they were accepted, or before any work was done, I visited Latrobe, where a deputation of landholders from both Kentishbury and Barrington waited on me, and represented that the work proposed was not fairly applying money voted by Parliament to the Kentishbury and Barrington Road. I therefore visited the locality on the following day with the Engineer-in-Chief, and met a number of landholders of both districts, Kentishbury and Barrington, and decided to carry out the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief, and to make a very necessary bridge across the Don, and to expend money on the road from the Don north west towards Barrington as far as it would go, abandoning previously proposed work between the Don and Sheffield, but allowing the work in Sheffield to proceed. The reason that decided me to act thus was that, having ridden the whole length, I saw for myself that the portion between the Don and the boundaries of Sheffield was not so much in need of improvement as the portion of road north west of the Don. For that reason and others I complied with what I thought was the wish of the majority of the Kentishbury and Barrington people, as represented to me, and believing also that I was fairly carrying out the intention of Parliament when it voted the money.

*By Mr. Henry.*—Is this portion in course of construction paid for out of the grant? Yes.

Is it on the main road from Kentishbury to Railton? The road on which the whole is being expended is on the main road from Kentishbury and Barrington to Railton.

Committee adjourned till Tuesday, 20th January, at 12 o'clock.