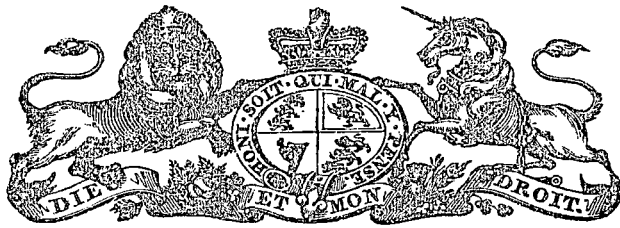


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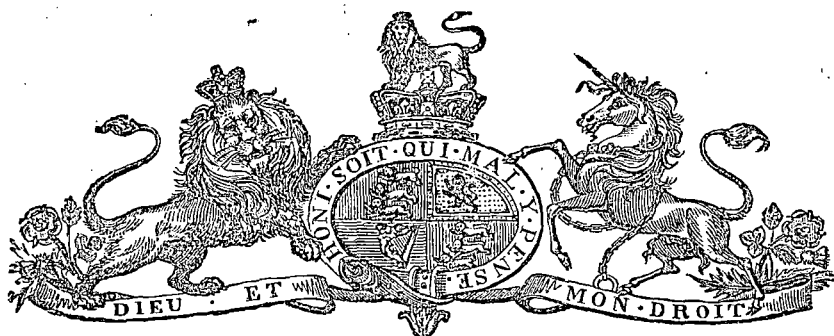


1866.

T A S M A N I A.

REPORTS ON CROWN LANDS AND ROADS,
COUNTIES OF WELLINGTON, DEVON, AND DORSET.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be
printed, 21 August, 1866.



REPORTS on the Crown Lands and proposed Roads in the County of WELLINGTON.

No. 1.

Table Cape, 18th May, 1866.

SIR,

WITH reference to your instructions to me to report upon any lots of crown land within my District, I have the honor to forward you the enclosed lithographic plans, indicating by the colours thereon the qualities and extent of all the crown lands within my District as far as I have yet ascertained.

No. 1. About 1500 acres adjacent to the Township of Montague.—A main line of road from the Duck River to the Montague, (were it only defined), and Muddy Creek bridged, would, I believe, ensure the speedy settlement of this block. West of the Montague River, on the Van Diemen's Land Company's block, is about 2000 acres of superior forest land: when examining this for the Company's agent, I was strongly impressed with the idea that this quality extended east of the Montague in a north-easterly direction, as sketched on the plan and marked heavily timbered forest lands, quality and extent unknown. This description of the block is derived from a tour along the plains by the north-west boundary of the block, and as viewed from an elevation on the west side of the Montague.

I beg to suggest that an examination of this block be made under instructions.

The open heathy plains north of this block furnish abundance of feed for bullocks and young stock, and would doubtless be an inducement for settlers to go southward, should good land be found there.

No. 2. West of Duck River.—I have entered this block from the north end about three miles southerly, found what I presumed to be Mr. Wedge's track, and the description corresponding with that given by that gentleman in 1828.

A road to the shipping-place at Duck River from this block is indispensable as appertaining to the settlement of this block. This road would pass through (probably) one mile of marshy forest, which would require to be corduroyed. This said marshy forest furnishes an extensive quantity of blackwood of good quality and large dimensions, and has been extensively shipped to the Melbourne market.

Had timber licences not been issued to persons employed in the blackwood trade, this land would have readily sold at 20s. per acre. The soil is of medium quality, and capable of improvement by drainage. The extent of good land south of this is to me unknown, and I beg to suggest that it be ascertained under instructions.

No. 3. A block of superior land east of Duck River, heavily timbered, abounding in stringy bark, musk, dogwood, and fern trees. I have penetrated this block in three different places from the north border for a distance of about two miles, and found a like character to prevail. The outlet is the Duck River. Should this block on further examination prove as extensive as I anticipate, it would doubtless warrant the expenditure of some money on a road.

No. 4. Between Deep Creek and the Detention River there is an extensive tract of forest land similar in character to No. 3. Three-fourths of this block along the northern border is suitable for settlement, the other quarter being principally steep gullies and inferior spots. The outlet for this extensive block is Stanley, and the direction of the necessary roads depends principally on the main

line of road, or the continuation of that portion of the main line of road from Wynyard to Detention River recently surveyed by Mr. Dooley. This road will probably tap or pass near to the north-east portion of this block, and a branch joining the said main road a little west of the Black River extending southward will form the main arteries of transport for its produce.

Mr. Surveyor Wedge's Report of this block, as far as my examination extended, seems to me to be accurate and reliable.

I beg to suggest, as an indispensable preliminary, that its extent southwards be ascertained by a thorough exploration.

No. 5. A block of about 12,000 acres east of the Detention River is principally superior forest land in a good situation, and rendered available by the road recently surveyed by Mr. Dooley.

The opening of this road and rendering it available for traffic only is necessary to ensure the speedy settlement of this block. Its proximity to the coast is a guarantee for the superiority of climate, and the main line of road to Circular Head passing through renders this the most attractive block in my District.

No. 6. About 3000 acres situated between the Inglis and Flowerdale Rivers. This block extends southwards for a distance of about eight miles, is well watered, and in a good situation. A branch road as sketched on plan crossing the Flowerdale River, and joining the recently surveyed main line of road, if made available for traffic would render this a very attractive block.

No. 7. About 3000 acres of good available land, and in a good situation, between the River Inglis and Black Fish Creek.

The Calder Road passes through this block, has been cleared of timber 16 feet wide, is unnecessarily tortuous with some bad spots through soft soil, imparting a repulsive character to the whole road.

This road requires altering in many spots. An outlay of about £300 would render this block as attractive and as suitable for settlement as any in my District.

No. 8. East of Black Fish Creek; extent unknown; is principally Myrtle forest of medium and good quality, and in some years hence will, in my opinion, sell at 20s. per acre.

No. 9. Between Big Creek and Stinking Creek. About 6000 acres of good land, well watered, and in a good situation. Many lots have been recently taken up here, principally by local residents showing for this place a decided preference.

The proposed road from the south corner of Wynyard, and the extension of other two roads, will ensure the speedy settlement of this block.

No. 10. About 8000 acres of good available land, is on the west side of the River Cam.

The proposed tramroad from Somerset through this block, if carried into effect, will, in my opinion, ensure the settlement of this district.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

N. SIMMONS.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq.*, *Surveyor-General*.

No. 2.

Table Cape, 9th July, 1866.

SIR,

In compliance with your request to report upon Duck Bay, &c., I beg to state that Duck Bay is a safe and commodious harbour, with good anchorage, &c.

The entrance is good. Vessels drawing 20 feet can enter at high water. Duck Bay is considered one of the best harbours in this district, and is much used by vessels as a place of refuge in stormy weather.

The present jetty or shipping place is about two miles from the anchorage in the bay up the Duck River, where vessels load drawing nine feet of water. About midway between the anchorage and jetty there is in mid-channel a rock which could be removed for the sum of £50,—this done, vessels could load at the jetty and go out drawing 12 feet.

Duck River is becoming more used every year as a shipping place. Now, many of the farmers in the forest on the Van Diemen's Land Company's Circular Head Block have erected stores for their produce, and ship from the Duck in preference to Stanley. Also the shipment of blackwood is about 500,000 feet annually.

With reference to connecting Duck Bay with the proposed bridge over the Detention River, the road, in as direct a line as the evenness of the land will admit, would open up Crown lands, but would be expensive, as I am well aware that the land about the Black River where it would cross is very uneven.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

N. SIMMONS.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq.*, *Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.*

No. 3.

Forth, 14th June, 1866.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to report to you the completion of your instructions dated October 28th, 1865.

I enclose herewith a rough sketch on a lithographic sheet as a reference to this Report. The general route of the main line from Wynyard to Detention River is indicated on the sketch by the firm red line. The whole distance operated upon is about $21\frac{1}{2}$ miles, commencing in Wynyard at the junction of Goldie with Saunders-street. I proceeded in a south-westerly direction, crossing Big Creek and the River Inglis at places suitable for bridging at a very moderate cost. This portion of the road is principally through open, heathy, sandy plains, through which a very tolerable road can be opened and maintained at a very moderate expense.

From thence I proceed in a north-westerly direction, gradually ascending through private lands, rich soil, and heavily timbered, for a distance of about three miles.

From thence I go in a westerly direction to Sisters Creek, passing principally through Crown Lands of superior quality and heavily timbered, with a fair admixture of all our usual shrubs and timbers, the quantity of which I estimate at 15,000 acres, three-fourths of which—11,250 acres—is first class land, and well adapted for agricultural purposes. It is well watered, easy of access *via* the new route, and for climate and situation is unsurpassed. The extreme distances to the shipping-place at Wynyard is 4 to 12 miles, average distance 8 miles. This block extends to the coast at Jacobs' Boat Harbour,—a reputed tolerable shipping-place, which when better known (like most other places along our coast) will be more appreciated.

The main road, together with the branch crossing the Flowerdale and extending in a south-westerly direction between the Flowerdale and Inglis, will give access to the whole of this block, as also to the private land through which the main road passes, which hitherto has been all but inaccessible and is consequently unimproved.

From Sisters Creek westerly for about three miles, passing through the edge of the forest bordering on the east side of the Sisters Tiers, and thence across these tiers, in all a distance of about two miles. From thence I pass westerly through a block of Crown Land of good quality, well adapted for settlement. At the west end of this block is a new settlement struggling into existence; their operations, as they have tested them, being very successful.

I estimate the available Crown Land in this at 7000 acres, 5000 of which is superior forest land well adapted for settlement, surrounded by a heathy grassy country furnishing an abundance of feed for cattle, or even a limited number of sheep; a fact which will, in my opinion, superinduce the settlement of this as well as of the other block previously described.

The 7000 acre block is the same as described in the Report of 1828, made by J. H. Wedge, *Esq.*, then Assistant Surveyor, &c.

These two blocks comprise 16,250 acres of superior Crown Land, and, in my opinion, will be taken up as fast as the road is fitted for traffic.

The rendering available of such a block of Crown Lands so contiguous to the Township of Wynyard is a matter of no inconsiderable moment to the local interest. Inexpensive too, inasmuch as it is consequent on the best mode of effecting the primary object—the main line of road.

Roads from the main line will also be required for the complete accommodation of this block, and should, in my opinion, be marked off previous to the survey of allotments.

I have partially examined the country adjacent to the coast from the Detention to the Duck River, and think it very probable that an almost direct line is obtainable and practicable. If on examination it be found so, and that it be not unreasonably expensive, I would accord to it a very decided preference.

The advantages of this route to the crown estate (if found practicable) would be incalculable.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JAMES M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General.*

No. 4.

H. M. Customs, Stanley, 7th July, 1866.

SIR,

I HAVE had the honor to receive per S. S. *Samson* your instructions with reference to Duck Bay bearing date 29th ultimo. Your desire for early information induces me to write at once without any special examination, which would entail the expenditure of both time and money, and had better be done by a professional man; besides which, you are aware that I am at present physically incapable of the exertion, and suffering from an untoward accident.

2. Accompanying this letter I beg to send an outline plan of Duck Bay, which, so far as the land outline is concerned, is probably pretty correct, but so far as the channels, &c. are concerned is probably very inaccurate, but will serve the purpose of illustrating my letter, and perhaps render it more intelligible.

3. I consider Duck Bay one of the best harbours on this coast line. The entrance is free from any special danger, and there is a deep water anchorage immediately inside, in which vessels are sheltered from all winds. It is my opinion that six or eight vessels have room to swing at their anchors in that anchorage.

4. I have never sounded at *the bar* myself, but for years have made repeated enquiries from persons who had had the best knowledge of the place. The lowest figure or estimate of depth that I have ever heard allotted to it was four feet at low water at spring tides; the highest was seven or eight feet at the same periods. It is *safe* to assume that there is never less than four feet on that bar at the periods indicated. The entrance at the bar is the eighth of a mile wide (or thereabouts), and immediately inside it is a channel of two, three, and four fathoms. My informants vary in their statements, but they all consider it a *deep* channel, and my own observation confirms their view. The same variation of statement is made as to the soundings in the deep water anchorage. It suffices to say of this, that all vessels that can *enter* can keep afloat in it at low water. At neap tides the depth on the bar will be greater at low water.

5. I estimate the rise of tide as varying from eight to twelve feet, so that the depth on the bar at high water will vary from twelve or fourteen feet to sixteen or eighteen feet as a maximum. Vessels of 80 to 90 tons, and even larger, can and do *beat* up this channel to the anchorage.

6. The river channel (imperfectly shown in my sketch) will allow vessels of 120 tons to load at the wharf at Smithton up to eight feet draught: indeed, at the wharf they could load to a greater draught if there were not a bar in a bend in the "river channel." It depends entirely on the build of the vessel as to the number of tons which can be taken at the wharf; but I consider the river adapted to the ordinary class of vessels of 70 or 80 tons. The removal of the "channel bar" would be quite possible, and would improve the river.

7. The ordinary place of loading is at the wharf. The highest point whence goods are shipped is indicated by the mark A, whence blackwood logs are floated down in rafts or palings in boats. No farm produce is ever shipped here, but only at the wharf, where there are a few potato sheds.

8. There are not any vessels trading to the Duck River specially. The business is entirely in the hands of one or two persons of Stanley, who send the regular traders thither round to Duck Bay when requisite. These vessels load to eight feet at the wharf, and then drop down into the deep water, boating or rafting the rest of their cargo. Their size varies from 50 to 120 tons register,—generally from 60 to 80.

9. The "east channel" is never used, but I think it a good one, that will be used hereafter. I suppose that vessels drawing eight feet could pass the points at the "*shell pits*" with ease at high water, but I know very little about it.

10. I imagine the "west channel" to be only passable for boats at high water.

11. There is one inhabited hut on Smithton.

12. The quantity of good land in the vicinity is very limited; but at a little distance beyond the lots which have been taken up I *believe* (but do not know) a much larger area of good land will be discovered. I say this from the appearance of the forest from a distance, and allude to the right bank of the river. It will be difficult to get at from the want of roads.

13. The wharf at Smithton was built by subscription, and is sadly out of repair. The tide reaches as far as the bridge.

14. There is no good land on the left or west side, but there is *said* to be an exhaustless bed of blackwood timber in the extensive swamps. It is very difficult to cart it out.

15. I am unable to give you any statistics as to the trade at Duck River, as it is small and so mixed up with that at Stanley that I have not thought it worth keeping separate.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

THOMAS MURRAY, L.W.

RICHD. H. WILLIS, Esq., J.P., Collector of Customs.

No. 5.

Stanley, Circular Head, 17th November, 1859.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to lay before you a Report on the nature, capabilities, and probable requirements of this Survey District.

The land lying between the Cam and the Emu Rivers being wholly the property of the Van Diemen's Land Company, I have not personally taken means to ascertain its value or requirements, as I believe you are fully aware of its nature and quality.

From the Cam to the Inglis the land, as a whole, may be taken as of the richest description for as far back as I have examined it.

The opening of another track near the Cam, to give access to the open grounds said to exist south of Somerset, is required. The track about to be cut along the Inglis to the dividing range between the Arthur and the coast waters, will give the means of ready access to that side.

Nothing has so much retarded the settlement of the coast lands generally as the want of even a bridle road; and very many persons have declined taking land behind those already settled for the reason that they had no access, and justly argued that to make a road would exhaust their means, and leave them incapable of improving the land when they had acquired it.

From the Road Trusts little or nothing can be expected in the way of opening tracks, as I believe the whole of their income is consumed in building bridges, and in keeping the main lines of road within the settlements in but indifferent repair.

This portion of the District demands especial attention, as I have no doubt it is destined to take the lead of all places west of the Mersey. The immense quantity of good land and inexhaustible beds of superior timber between the rivers, combined with a tolerably good harbour for vessels of light draught, and the facilities offered by the shelter of the Cape for the construction of a harbour for vessels of any class, give opportunity for shipment afforded by few others on the coast.

From the Inglis, for about four miles west, the land continues of the same quality; and for about the same distance inland, when we come to the lands drained by the Flowerdale, than which a wilder country cannot be conceived, covered in dense and almost impenetrable scrub, with patches of the tangled *Bauera* almost impervious, with watersheds innumerable, and hills of the most abrupt character, offer no inducement to settlement.

This kind of country, though, I am happy to say, it is of limited extent, reaches from the west bank of the Flowerdale to the Sisters Creek.

From thence to the Detention or Rocky Cape River is a series of high and barren hills, where the grass tree predominates, with occasional patches of the *Banksia* and stunted gum trees, with patches of tea tree, the ravines being filled with an impenetrable growth of the latter, and to get through which it requires the aid of the fern-knife to clear a track. This kind of country, I am informed by Mr. S. B. Emmett, continues for about 12 or 15 miles south, when a change takes place, and the barrens are replaced by coarse grassy downs and plains of considerable extent—I presume to the Arthur. As a great want is felt of grazing land in this District, it might be advisable to make a track across this part of the country.

Between the Detention and Black Rivers, there is, along the Detention, a wide extent of open barren ground, with belts of heavy scrub and forest land as far south and west as they eye can reach, as also along the coast to the Black River. About eight miles up the latter river the country assumes the usual character of rich land along the coast, and a large extent—I presume 20,000 acres—lies to the east of the river and extends to the water falling into the Detention; but, in the absence of any track, the country remains almost unknown.

To Mr. S. B. Emmett's report of his recent expedition south of the Van Diemen's Land Company's Circular Head block, I am indebted for a description of that portion of the District. That gentleman describes the land for a distance of about twelve miles south as of the usual rich character until reaching the *Bauera*, when it changes, as is usual, to the poorest kind—cold and wet, and totally unfit for any use whatever. He also describes a plain of immense extent, suitable for cattle runs, and having a river running through it falling to the south east. Some parties are preparing to start to examine this plain with a view of taking up runs.

From the Duck River to the Montagu, for about twenty miles inland, the country alternates between open heaths of the tufted *Gymnoschenes adustus*, stunted tea, and gum trees, and belts of forest land. From thence, I am told, the country is almost entirely open to the Arthur, and by that river to the coast the same character predominates. I cannot advise, until further acquaintance, any track to be opened in this locality farther than some assistance in aid of a new track to Woolnorth. The present road is bad indeed, and only available at low water.

A new track from Circular Head to Wynyard might be made, and the distance much reduced by bridging the Detention River, and carrying the track to the south of the Sisters, and in descending to the mouth of the Inglis pass through the rear of the lots fronting the Flowerdale and the Inglis to the road recently marked through Mr. Shekelton's lot, thus avoiding the very tedious, circuitous, and difficult coast road now in use.

Whilst on this subject, I think it highly necessary to open a track from the termination of the Van Diemen's Land Company's south road to the unsettled lands south of the Arthur, thus giving access to the open country recently discovered by Mr. Emmett, and also giving a more convenient and better road to the Unsettled Lands district than the present circuitous route by Woolnorth and the West Coast.

The geological features of nearly the whole of this District are entirely and highly favourable to the existence of auriferous deposits; some few quartz reefs tested proved its existence, as well as my recent discoveries on the Inglis,—the reefs tested lie contiguous to the coast, but, in my opinion, they have not been properly prospected or in a sufficient manner. Coal abounds in various localities, at the Duck River and Table Cape in particular. Rocky Cape doubtless contains under its barren exterior some mineral wealth to repay the labours of the explorer; a vein of pencil lead exists at Table Cape; tin ore abounds in the Flowerdale River in large quantities, five or six pounds can be obtained from a single dish of stuff. Iron ore, embedded in slate, is found in large quantities on the Black River. There is no doubt that in mineral wealth this District surpasses all others in the Island. I hope, in my next Report, to be able to furnish you with a more detailed account of the mineral resources of this District. The opening of the bridge road up the Inglis will afford the means of thoroughly examining that portion, and a ready means of forwarding specimens of the different rocks for examination.

I believe I have now given you all the information I could collect in reference to this District. I shall endeavour, as early as possible, to make myself acquainted with that portion of the country in the vicinity of the Arthur, and report accordingly.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

PETER LIMONDE LETTE.

J. E. CALDER, Esq., Surveyor-General.

EXTRACTS from Reports of R. C. GUNN, Esq. 1860.

I FOUND that persons were greatly deterred from settling or taking lands west of the River Leven, in consequence of the want of access or facility for passing the various rivers which empty themselves on the North Coast, and which can only be crossed at or about low tide, and in winter are flooded, and become extremely dangerous. Of those tidal rivers there are between Circular Head and the Leven seven,—some not very large, but yet forming serious impediments to travellers. From the limited funds at the command of the several Road Trusts, and I may add the unusually depressed circumstances of the inhabitants generally along the Coast, it must be many years ere the Road Trusts could perform these necessary works; joined to which I may observe, that bridges are less essential or important to the *residents*, who usually ship all their produce at the mouths of the rivers nearest to their respective properties, than they are to intending purchasers of land and persons desirous of visiting these remote localities. The want of bridges is felt seriously by all who desire to take stock down to their farms beyond the Leven, as it is now *impossible* to drive sheep, and very difficult to drive cattle. Thus a considerable quantity of salt meat, I am informed, is imported from Victoria for consumption.

With reference to the character and quality of the land in this part of the Island, I found from personal inspection, and from the information I received from Messrs. Lette and Dooley, the two Government Surveyors, that there is usually a tract of good rich land, forming a sort of plateau running to a considerable distance north and south, but only of moderate width, between every two rivers or important streams; the land on the margins of the rivers being inferior in quality, and the banks frequently steep and precipitous. These belts of rich land are heavily timbered, and are now entirely shut out from the inspection of intending settlers by dense scrubs and forests, which deter most men from venturing far from the beaten tracks.

From Table Cape a new line of road, avoiding the Coast, might ultimately be made to the Detention River, and thence to the Black River, at comparatively small cost. From this main road (or track) I would recommend smaller ones to be cut to run along the plateaus already mentioned. These would open up and give access to almost every tract of good land within a reasonable distance of the Coast; and they might at any future period be prolonged to the south, or otherwise be diverged, as the lands were disposed of. These tracks and the main road would, however, be comparatively valueless without bridges over the rivers and streams. As the cost of many large structures would be beyond the means allotted, I would recommend the erection of narrow bridges sufficient for the passage of horsemen and stock, but not available for carts. Of course, if the funds admitted of it, bridges wide enough for carts would be preferable, but are not actually necessary at the present time, as all the produce of each section (that is between each two rivers) would, as already observed, be carted to the nearest shipping place on the Coast.

I believe that if the bridges and tracks as suggested were made, the expenditure would be amply reproductive to the Government, and also give a great impulse to the progress and prosperity of the many important rising settlements on the North Coast.

Inglis, Table Cape, Hampshire Hills.—A track made from the coast almost due south by compass would open up a considerable extent of good country. It might with facility be continued to Henrietta Plain, and thence ultimately to Sheffield Plain. The latter is of a superior character, and is outside of the Van Diemen's Land Company's grant. Such a track would not be expensive, and would I think prove highly remunerative by the sale of the lands.

Circular Head.—Lying south of the Van Diemen's Land Company's grant there is some good land of the usual heavily timbered myrtle and musk tree character, but the quantity is uncertain. I would suggest the continuation of the track already cut to the River Hellyer in a southerly direction, so as to cross the River Arthur, and thence to branch off to the coast between the Arthur and Pieman. This would open up a country of which little is known, and of which no portion has been seen since Mr. J. H. Wedge's arduous journey round from Woolnorth to Circular Head in 1828, as laid down in the old Maps. If good land exists it would soon find occupants; and, under any circumstances, it would be very desirable to have access to the West Coast.

The Hellyer can be forded in summer, or bridged where it is confined between rocky banks. £3 or £4 per mile would make a bridle track, which, if necessary, could easily be widened at any subsequent period.

Mr. Lette and I occupied a day in ascending Mount Parse, being the most western mountain at the Surrey Hills, and very near the western boundary of the Van Diemen's Land Company's grant, with an elevation of about 3500 feet above the sea level. Our object was to examine the

country lying to the westward between the Rivers Pieman and Arthur; a course I was most anxious to follow, had time permitted, after completing the examination of the country along the north coast. The result of my investigation was, that it would be unsafe for any ordinary party to attempt to penetrate to the west coast from the Surrey Hills, without having previously had a depôt of provisions made at some point between the Arthur and Pieman. The country seems quite impracticable for horses; and if it is as scrubby as I have every reason to suspect it to be, it would be impossible for men to carry on their backs more than 14 days' provisions, with blankets, tent, &c.; and I calculate it would take about that time to reach the sea. That country remains unexplored and almost unknown, but I believe it could be crossed without much difficulty by the means I have suggested.

No. 7.

OFFICIAL REPORT of Journeys made by J. H. WEDGE, Esq., Assistant Surveyor, in the North-west portion of Van Diemen's Land, in the early part of the Year 1828.

SIR,

I BEG to communicate that, in obedience to the instructions I received from the late Acting Surveyor-General on the 13th December, 1827, directing me to survey, examine, and report upon the North-west District of the Island, for the purpose of locating to the Van Diemen's Land Company a grant of land, I proceeded to that quarter, and have executed the task entrusted to me to the fullest extent practicable, the season being so far advanced; and although I was unable to survey it by sections according to my instructions, as it was not possible, in consequence of the distance and the nature of the country, to provide conveyance for the provisions required for the men employed on the duty; yet, I hope the result of the examination I have made is such as will enable the Local Government to come to a decision. As considerable delay in executing the survey must unavoidably have resulted had I adhered to the strict letter of my instructions, and the period be unnecessarily protracted before sufficient information could be furnished by which the limits of the grant could be fixed,—a matter not less important to the interests of the Company than to the despatch of the business of the department to which I belong,—I was induced to employ Mr. Charles Wedge in the survey of the coast, whilst I was occupied in the examination of the interior; the charts of this part of the Island being so entirely incorrect that it was not possible to describe the routes with any degree of accuracy.

My examination commenced at the Crayfish River, about ten miles east of Circular Head. From the mouth of the river I proceeded in a south direction over a country which, for the first two miles and a half, with the exception of a very narrow strip of indifferent sandy soil free from timber, with a small proportion of herbage, is composed of low rocky rises, rather thinly covered with the gum and stringy-bark trees. A small space of sandy land covered with heath and free timber now succeeds, and appears to continue nearly of the same character in a direction parallel with the coast to the westward as far as the Black River. From the sandy land, to the distance of about seven miles and a half, is a thick forest of stringy bark and gum trees, being broken into a succession of low ridges, between which are numerous runs of water with an easterly direction. The soil is composed of clay, and would make fine tillage land if cleared. In the water-courses the prevailing timber is sassafras and the pencil cedar, with a few blackwood trees. Continuing nearly in the same direction, I crossed the Hook River, and proceeded along a range of hills intercepted with steep gullies for about seven miles, and then crossed the Alarm River. The east side of these hills is destitute of timber, and covered with heath; the soil is wet and sandy, and but little adapted for grazing in its present state. On the west it is thickly covered with gum trees, and the country in that direction, as far as can be seen from the tops of the hills, is one continued forest similar to that I have already described. Extending from the entrance of the River Tret into Bass's Straits to these hills, there are plains free from timber, the soil of which is sandy, producing a coarse grass intermixed with heath, which would maintain a limited quantity of stock if artificial grasses were introduced, and which might be easily accomplished at a very inconsiderable expense by burning off the grass, &c. in the dry season, and sowing the seeds in the early part of autumn. There are, I think, from three to four thousand acres in these plains. It may perhaps be worthy of remark, that whilst travelling through the forest I set fire to the underwood on the margin of the plains, and that it burnt to a considerable extent, and in a great measure cleared the land, and rendering it, with little additional labour and expense in collecting and burning the dead timber, fit for the purposes of grazing.

The Hook and the Alarm are rivers falling into the Tret, the stream of the former being about the size of the Hobart Town Rivulet, the latter rather larger. After crossing the Alarm River near its junction with the Tret, I came to the foot of the hills forming the Dip Range. The direction of these hills is S. 26° W. for about twelve miles, the Alarm River running along their western side dividing them from the forest. On their western aspect they are free from timber, wet and sandy, producing little besides heath. Near the junction of the rivers there is a portion of alluvial land covered with coarse herbage, which might be rendered available. Having arrived at this point I was obliged to return, contrary to my intention, in consequence of the illness of one of my men. I therefore went about three miles up the Tret, which takes its course from a thickly wooded country east of the Dip Range. Having crossed the river, I passed through a narrow track of thickly wooded land, and came to the bare hills which lead to Rocky Cape. These are of the same character as the western side of the Dip Range. There is a narrow forest between them and the River Tret, and the country to the eastward of them is also thickly wooded to a considerable extent. After arriving at Rocky Cape, I crossed the mouth of the Tret, about which the land is marsh; and from hence to the Black River along the coast there is a narrow strip of land affording pasturage for stock.

My second journey I commenced at East Bay, near Circular Head, taking a direction nearly south for about fifteen miles, touching on the course of the Black River, the direction of which is from the east of south, and from thence to the sea it runs east of north. The whole of this distance is one continued forest, the timber of which, after passing through a narrow vein of tea tree, I found, for the first two or three miles, to consist of gum, stringy bark, pencil cedar, and with fine blackwood trees interspersed. The remainder of the distance the forest is almost entirely composed of the pencil cedar and sassafras, with stringy bark. The fern tree was also in great abundance. My track was along the foot of some low rises for seven or eight miles. I then entered the hills and found them to be a clay soil of good quality. Having changed my direction, I went due west for about ten miles over the same description of country. My course for the next five or six miles was due north, still amongst the hills and forest, and the soil of the same nature as the forest land before mentioned. At the foot of these hills I came on a narrow tract of sandy and heathy plains, bounded on the west by a small rivulet running nearly in a northern direction to its entrance into Duck Bay, and on the east by the forest. Where the rivulet falls into the bay there is a portion of good land and pasturage for sheep, upon which the Company have removed a flock from Cape Grim, consisting of about 500, and besides these they have a sheep-run at the Hampshire Hills, 18 miles from the coast; but the amount cannot be very great as I was told that their flocks, including both purchased and imported sheep, do not exceed 2000. In the bed of the rivulet and on its banks, and also in the east end of the bay there are a number of mineral springs; the nature of them I had no means of ascertaining, but have left instructions with Mr. Charles Wedge to bring some of the water with him in order that its character may be determined. I started on my third journey from the left bank of the Duck River at its entrance into Duck Bay, and followed up its course (S. 20° W.) for about eight miles; thus far it was a heathy plain, varying in width from half a mile to a mile and a half, being intersected in one place by a forest about a mile wide, and bounded on the east by the Duck River, and on the west by a thick forest of gum and stringy bark trees, with a thick tea tree underwood on its margin. The soil of the forest is silicious and wet, but adapted to agricultural purposes when cleared. After crossing the Duck River, the same description of sandy soil continues for about a mile, when I entered a low flat forest of very fine alluvial soil, which continued for about three miles, a branch of the Duck River running through it and joining it a little above where I crossed. I now passed over a succession of hills, proceeding in a south direction for upwards of sixteen miles. These hills are a continuation of those described in my second journey, and are of the same character both as respects the timber and soil. This part of the country is well watered by the Duck River and the River Montagu, and their numerous branches, running nearly parallel to each other.

From hence I went in a north-west direction to Mount Cameron, on the West Coast. Having descended the hills for about a mile, I entered a swampy forest, frequently mid-leg deep in water and mud, so thickly choked up with tea tree and tied together with sharp flag grass, that it required the most persevering exertions to force my way through it. This forest continued for about six miles, and I was only enabled to travel at the rate of rather more than two miles daily. It is an alluvial soil, and is capable of being drained. Emerging from it, I travelled through a low forest of stringy bark trees and pencil cedar, skirting the swampy forest on my right for about five miles, occasionally passing through veins of tea tree growing very thick. Hence towards the coast the country was rather more hilly, and the soil clay for about five miles. The country to the north is somewhat lower, undulating with low rises, and covered with the Eucalyptus and pencil cedar, and a thick underwood of dogwood. I had now again to encounter a wet forest of tea tree extending about five miles, and terminating at the heathy plains which skirt the West Coast of the Island. The tea tree in this forest is of a different description to that I before noticed, growing into spars of various dimensions, some of them of considerable girth. After ascending Mount Cameron to get a view of the country, I proceeded in a direction N. 27° E. to Robin's Passage. Mount Cameron and the adjacent land, to a small extent, is a silicious soil of fine quality, covered with very rich and luxuriant pasturage; and the line of coast is bounded by land of the same description to a limited extent. At rather more than five miles from Mount Cameron I crossed the Welcome River, which runs from the east of south and falls into Bass's Straits a few miles east of Cape Grim. The land

on the banks is thinly timbered, and the soil is of the same description, but of better quality than the heathy plains which continue all the way to Robin's Passage. These sandy and heathy plains are intersected with numerous rills of water. As deep as I was enabled to examine (three feet and upwards), the soil is composed entirely of sand; but, from its being so exceedingly wet, it has probably a substratum of clay. The plains are bounded nearly all the way to Robin's Passage by the forest, and are from three to five miles in width.

The description of a considerable portion of the country within my last route remaining unascertained, I started from the Coast about ten miles west from the Duck River, directing my course due south ten or twelve miles. There is an excellent strip of marsh land, of limited extent, immediately adjoining the coast; and from thence, for a mile and a half, there is a heathy plain, covered with coarse grass, but of better quality than the generality of the plains of a like description, and by drainage might be made productive. This plain is bounded by forest on the east, south, and west sides. Continuing onward for a mile, I touched on the end of another heathy plain, which extended to the westward, and again entered the forest, and for four miles passed over a succession of low rises and a good clay soil. I now came on a flat tract of forest, principally of tea tree, the soil a fine loam. This description of land continues for about three miles and a half to some bare heathy hills which project into the forest for about three miles or more, a little north of Mount Cameron. These hills are sterile and bad, producing no herbage fit for the depasturing of stock. Taking a direction N. 77° W. along the hills for about two miles and a half, I descended to the banks of the Welcome River, near where it enters the forest, and crossed it: I followed down its course for about five miles. The land is of the same character as where I crossed it before. I again passed the river, to examine more particularly the land on its banks, near its entrance into the Bay. I found it to be of rather better quality; and there is excellent marsh land along the west side of the bay, and adjoining it, for about a mile and a half. To the west the land is lightly timbered with gum trees, affording pasturage both for sheep and cattle.

A tract of about three miles and a half of wet sandy plain now intersects some rich marshes, which adjoin a fine country for sheep at and about Cape Grim. This country is rather hilly, the soil of a light silicious nature, with a sufficient quantity of gum and honeysuckle trees to afford shelter for the stock from the extremes of the climate: it is covered with luxuriant grass, and is watered by springs.

From Cape Grim to Mount Cameron, along the coast, the land is of the same silicious nature as at Cape Grim, but not quite of so good a quality; but still affording abundance of feed for sheep: it contracts in width as it approximates Mount Cameron. And again, from the Mount to West Point, where the forest which bounds the heathy plains closes in on the coast, the good land* becomes very narrow. Immediately at West Point there is a small quantity of land adapted for sheep; but from thence, for about ten miles, the coast is skirted by a tract of bad heathy plains, varying from two to three miles in width; and these again are bounded by a forest. At the termination of the plains, I came to some undulating land, producing very abundant feed for sheep: it is lightly covered with dwarf gum and honey-suckle trees. This fine tract of land continues for about fourteen or fifteen miles down the coast, and is watered by the River Arthur passing through it about two miles from its commencement. This river is of very considerable magnitude, discharging into the sea a greater body of water than the South Esk in the Tamar; and it is near a quarter of a mile in width where I crossed it. It has a bar harbour. About three miles and a half from the river the grassy hills gradually contract in width to their termination, and are divided from the forest by heathy plains of the same quality I have before described.

About six miles further to the southward, the sandy plains suddenly open to a considerable extent eastward; and towards their extremity, at the distance of ten or twelve miles from the coast, there is a high conical mount (Mount Balfour), which I ascended, from whence I had an extensive view of the country. To the north and north east beyond the plains, the country is apparently all forest; to the east and south east, hilly, with valleys lightly timbered. The hilly country to the south east is bounded by a range of mountains whose direction is from east to west, and (I think) connecting with the mountains in the centre of the Island.

About six miles N. 75° E. from the mount I crossed the River Balfour, which comes from the neighbourhood of Mount Norfolk, and runs in a direction N. 30° E., and proceeded about two miles further, skirting the forest on my left. In this direction the country gradually improves, and there are valleys opening to the south east which I have but little doubt terminate in a fine country, and probably are connected with the Surrey Hills.

The wind continuing from south west, and driving a prodigious surf on the shore, I was unable to get the boat past Cape Grim with my provisions; and as I did not know the situations of the very few boat-harbours on the coast, I was under the necessity of having them conveyed in knapsacks. Being thus circumstanced, and without an adequate supply of provisions to enable me to push my researches further in this quarter, I determined to penetrate through the forests

* Good land, as in general described in this Report, appears to apply to open land fit for pasture.

in a direction N. 60° E., with the view of making the Dip Range. At the distance of two miles and a half from the River Balfour, I crossed the River Leigh, which runs N. 40° W., and entered the forest. Continuing in the same direction (N. 60° E.) for about half a mile, I came to some good open grassy plains, extending to the left towards the Leigh. These plains I consider are to the extent of fifteen hundred acres or more: they are a clay soil. Beyond them I passed through a forest about three miles in extent, and crossed the River Horton, which divides the forest from some beautiful open plains, extending rather to the east of south towards the Surrey Hills. About five miles to the northward, these plains are watered by the River Frankland running through them; again, about two miles further on, by the River Don, and also by the River Arthur. The latter has a considerable and rapid stream: a narrow forest of stringy-bark trees extends along its course, (N. 20° W.) From the entrance into these plains to the Arthur the surface is unequal, rising into easy acclivities, and diversified by clumps of trees, forming the most beautiful park-like scenery. It is clay soil, rather wet, but covered with luxuriant grass. I found the Arthur much swollen by the continued rains, and had great difficulty in crossing it, after being delayed two days. In the neighbourhood of this river, in a direction N. 20° E. I passed over some poor heathy hills for about 4 miles, and from thence through a hilly forest for about five miles, with a rapid river running through it in a direction S. 40° W. I now ascended the Blue Peaked Hill, which is surrounded by a poor heathy plain. From the top of this hill I had an extensive view of the country, which to east and south east is bare hills, intersected by narrow veins of forest. Descending this hill, and passing through a strip of forest, I again came on some narrow plains, about three miles in length, with a coarse grass upon them. Continuing along the plains for two miles I entered the forest, through which runs a river falling into the Hellyer, flowing nearly west. The width of this river and the rush of water was such as to give me little hopes of effecting a passage over it, particularly as the large trees we cut down were washed away by the violence of the current. A delay of five days ensued before we succeeded in crossing it. Instead of continuing towards the Dip Range I was necessitated to make a direct course for Circular Head, as our provisions were nearly exhausted. With the exception of a narrow wet plain, the country is one continued forest the whole of the way to Circular Head. A range of hills of about two miles in width runs along the course of the river, from which to the plain it is a flat forest. The plain is a cold wet clay soil, producing coarse herbage; it is about half a mile in width and three miles in length. From this plain for about four miles or more I passed over the east side of the hills described in my second journey. In consequence of the forest I could nowhere get a distinct view, but it appeared lower and hilly in the direction of the Dip Range. I now passed through the forest which skirts the coast in the vicinity of Circular Head. This extensive forest is of the same description, as far as I had an opportunity of ascertaining; the soil being a rich clay, and the timber for the greater part pencil cedar, intermixed with sassafras, and a few stringy-bark of the largest dimensions I ever met with, and also a great quantity of fern trees.

The promontory at Circular Head, on which the Company have commenced their operations, contains about four thousand acres; and, with the exception of a small quantity of poor sandy soil surrounding the high land to the south, it is land of first-rate quality, producing the most luxuriant herbage, and adapted for the feeding both of sheep and cattle. In the northern part of the promontory are fine open plains which, in places, are rather wet; in the centre it is somewhat heavily timbered with gum-trees; but the land, when cleared, is admirably adapted for the cultivation of grain, turnips, and potatoes. At the establishment, the extent of the improvements is at present confined to the erection of three weather-boarded houses and a number of sod huts for the men, a log building for a store, and a good stable. A substantial barn also is building. Of fencing, notwithstanding the advantage of the situation, little has been done; not more than 200 acres have been enclosed, of which 60 or 70 have been brought into cultivation. At the Hampshire Hills, 18 miles inland, they have a station simply for the shepherds and their flocks in that quarter.

In order to bring under one view the nature and eligibility of the different tracts of land I have explored, and to assist the Government in its decision respecting the limits of the Company's location, it will be necessary to particularise the different descriptions of land in the north-west quarter of the Island. It will appear that it consists of grassy land that may be taken possession of with but little expense—the sandy plains and the forest land. Without taking into the estimate the small detached spots, it may be calculated that at Circular Head, Cape Grim, along the West Coast, and the Grassy Hills, I discovered that there are at least forty thousand acres of land fit for the immediate purposes of grazing, with the probability that there is a considerable extent interspersed among the forest yet undiscovered; and also that a great scope may be brought into tillage at a very moderate outlay of capital. The heathy hills in the neighbourhood of the River Tret, the plains in the vicinity of the Duck River, those along the northern coast, and also the extensive plains dividing the good land from the forest along the western coast, amount altogether to about one hundred thousand acres; and cannot be considered fit for either of the purposes of agriculture or grazing, being of a bad quality and very wet. *The forests are extensive, and may be estimated at about seven hundred thousand acres.* This land, being heavily timbered is unpromising in its present state, and such as no private individual could possibly undertake to improve.* It is,

* Such land is now (1866) found to be the richest, and is preferred to the open grassy lands that in 1828 were considered the most valuable. Mr. Thomas Giblin, of Hobart Town, has, within the last few years, cleared about 150 acres of heavily timbered land near Alma, on the River Forth, at a cost of 30s. per acre, ringing the large trees and cutting down and burning the small timber and scrub. On this land, without ploughing, he had the first year 40 bushels of Oats to the acre.

nevertheless, of excellent quality, and such as the Company's resources might be employed upon with the prospect of ultimate success. There is no doubt but the expense of clearing such land will be great; but if a judicious system be laid down and acted upon, it will not be so heavy as it would appear to be on a first glance; for, if it be progressively done, the produce of that which is first cleared will contribute largely towards improving the remainder. The timber in these forests, of which the greater portion is pencil cedar, may prove a valuable article of export, and defray a great portion of the expense of clearing the land. It is therefore my opinion that this description of land is available for the Company's purposes, for it will undoubtedly, when cleared, be some of the most valuable land in the Island; and, in support of this opinion, I may instance that, in the United States and other New Countries in America, the land with the greatest quantity of timber upon it is chosen as being the most valuable.

As there is a considerable quantity of sandy plains not available, and the expense of reclaiming the forest land will be great, I would beg to recommend that the limits of the grant should be extended, and that the Tret and Alarm Rivers should be appointed as the eastern boundary as far as their courses will answer for that purpose; and from the end of the latter river, a line bearing due south till it intersects an east line to be drawn from the west coast, passing over Mount Balfour for the southern boundary; the contents of which area will amount to near a million of acres. Within these limits, it may be fairly computed that there will, at least, be fifty thousand acres of land fit for the reception of stock, without any considerable outlay being required; which may be considered a very fair proportion in reference to their grant; thus affording an ample scope for the employment of their extensive capital.

In remarking on the rivers which fall into Bass' Straits and along the western coast, I observed that some of them discharge considerable quantities of water; but that they are all bar harbours; and it did not appear to me that—with the exception of Emu Bay, Circular Head, and on the east point of Cape Grim—there is any place affording shelter for vessels, or being capable of being made fit for such a purpose. As the Company are in possession of two of these situations, namely Circular Head and Cape Grim, I beg to bring under the consideration of the Government the importance of reserving the other situation (Emu Bay) for a township, or for any other Government purpose which may be deemed necessary. And I may further observe, that the interest of those colonists who may locate in the adjacent country to the southward of Emu Bay will require it as their port; and the importance of that part of the country will be materially enhanced by such a reservation, it being the only situation on the coast that will answer for a township from whence their produce can be exported. Indeed, I consider the reservation of this situation of such moment, not only to the interest of the colonists, but also to the Government itself, that I feel bound to bring it under special consideration; and, in doing it, I beg further to observe, that I do not consider it will interfere in the least with the interests of the Company, as their boundary will not extend so far eastward. But, should it be thought essential to the interests of the Company to have an establishment there, the indulgence of an allotment could be given; thus extending to them every advantage that the possession of the whole place could afford. The Company have already taken possession of this spot; but no improvements have been made besides the erection of one building intended for a store, and a few miserable bark huts, and the clearing of about two acres of land; the whole of which might be included in one allotment, making the usual reservation of frontage to the Crown.

All the advantages to be looked for in a country in its natural state, and which are so desirable in the commencement of an undertaking on the scale the Company are supposed to proceed upon, are comprised within the limits I have recommended. The rivers, being shoal and rapid, do not afford the means of inland navigation; but this defect is peculiar to the Island, and has been felt in the settled districts. With the exception of the heathy plains, the land is of the first-rate quality, though to a great extent heavily timbered; but this, I imagine, will not be any impediment to the Company in their outset, as they have a fair proportion of pasture land that they may commence and carry on every agricultural pursuit with little trouble, and at a comparatively trifling expense. The country is altogether well watered by numerous streams which empty themselves into Bass' Straits and the Western Ocean, and possesses many sites for the erection of every description of machinery. Of the more useful woods, there are plenty of the finest description and of easy access; for the Country presents fewer impediments to inland transport than the more mountainous parts of the settled districts.

As some time may elapse before Mr. Charles Wedge will reach Launceston with his survey, I have been under the necessity of adopting the general outline of the coast in that quarter as given in the chart of the Island; which, though incorrect, may serve to exhibit my different routes. To avoid confusion, I have quoted the names used by the Company's Surveyors, and the rivers and other prominent features of the hitherto unexplored country to the south of Circular Head. I have given the names appearing on the accompanying sketch for the facility of reference.

I have, &c.,

J. H. WEDGE.

GEORGE FRANKLAND, *Esquire, Surveyor-General.*

EXTRACTS from Mr. HOBBS's Report of a Boat Survey round the Island of Van Diemen's Land, from 5th February to 10th July, 1824.

WHILST I was here (Macquarie Harbour), I made two excursions into the country; one to the Dagular Range,* and another to Mount Sorell. From the former, nothing appeared but one mountain towering over another. From the view I had from the highest part of Mount Sorell, I am perfectly satisfied there is not more than 20 miles of a mountainous country in an easterly direction. Plains might be entered by passing over the south corner of the large lake,† and keeping in sight a high table mountain, laid down in the chart as near Macquarie Harbour. When I read the account of Pearce's Travels to the High Plains, I was still more confirmed in this opinion. James Carritts, who was with me, relates that he was upon these plains many years ago, when Mr. Beaumont returned, and could not find the way. This is the good land which Carritts mentioned to Captain Montagu.

Pieman's River is in latitude $41^{\circ} 40' 13''$ south. The mouth of it is totally unfit to approach, even with a boat, from the very heavy swell that immediately runs in upon the Bay; and, in fact, all along this coast there is as much sea in fine weather as there is on the East Coast in a gale of wind. I was obliged to carry the boat into the river. I proceeded up 18 miles before I met anything to impede my progress, when I arrived at numerous falls, and hauled the boat over them. This is as far as any boat can go. The falls are 21 in number. This river runs from a swampy plain about Mount Heemskirk. Its banks abound with pine of the very best quality; also lightwood and myrtle. At some distance, towards its source, is a very high clear hill, from the top of which I had a full view of all the country around; but notwithstanding the dangerous entrance, it still is practicable to get timber there should it become scarce at Macquarie Harbour. The land about is sterile, but not so much so as all to the southward of it. Being anxious to know if much land did exist to the northward of this river, as has been represented, I sent Carritts, accompanied by two men, to examine the land, and travel as far as Cape Grim, while I proceeded along the coast with the boats.

Near West Point, on the south side, there is a river (the Arthur) in latitude $41^{\circ} 3'$ similar to Pieman's River, with a bar-mouth, and an entrance equally dangerous. We carried the boat along the beach into the river, and then went up 15 miles to the falls. The water, like that of Pieman's River, is deep and salt up to the first falls, even at this dry season. The river rises from the low country around Mount Norfolk. The timber here consists of very fine stringy-bark, gum, and a few lightwood trees. The soil is barren, and little fit for any purposes, with the exception of a few patches, nearly a mile inland, of light sandy soil covered with grass.

* I cannot make out what mountain Mr. Hobbs means, none of our old charts notice it under this name.—J. E. C.

† The nearest lake of importance to Macquarie Harbour is Lake St. Clair, 50 miles off at least.—J. E. C.

REPORTS on the Crown Lands and Proposed Roads in the County of DEVON.

No. 1.

ROAD from River Leven to Preservation Bay, near Penguin Creek.

THIS is one of the most important Roads proposed for opening up the lands on the North Coast, as without it strangers and intending settlers are prevented proceeding beyond Ulverstone to select lands west of the Leven, in the counties of Devon and Wellington, the present cattle track through the Leven Forest being almost impassable; and for the like reason great delay is caused in the transmitting of the Coast Mails.

Mr. J. Firth, the Overseer of Works, has reported to the Director of Public Works in detail upon the manner in which it is proposed to construct the road. He also writes:—

“That the inhabitants of the District (with about one exception) are greatly in favour of the Coast Line, and that he considers it will be made more cheaply, be maintained cheaper, and, if measured, be shorter than the road through the Forest; the line will pass mostly through the Government Reserve, and there will be little if any compensation. The steepest gradients on the line will be one at ‘Walker’s,’ near the Leven, of 1 in 20; the other at the Penguin Creek, of 1 in 14.”

No. 2.

ROAD from Allison and Ulverstone Southwards between the Rivers Leven and Gawler.

THE Northern Sub-Board of Works reported in 1862 upon this Road as follows:—

“This Road, if cleared for about 10 miles, would open up (Mr. Dooley states) 5000 acres of good available Crown Land, and a further extension for 4 or 5 miles would open up what is called ‘Gunn’s New Country,’ where a large area of good Crown Land well adapted for settlement now remains completely locked up.”

Mr. R. C. Gunn reports, that “Gunn’s New Country” contains about 6000 acres of good land, and the following are also extracts from his published reports:—

The Cradle Mountain is quite accessible from Bond’s Plain,—open country extending all the way,—the “Hounslow Heath” of the V. D. L. Company’s Maps. This would be about the best line for marking out a track, to enable the southern flockowners to take sheep to depasture during the summer months in this quarter. There is much open, grassy country south and west of Middlesex Plains, equal in quality to Middlesex Plains themselves, as also at the Vale of Belvoir and Cattley Plains, all Crown Land. Its great drawback is its elevation above the sea, and consequent severity of climate, rendering it available for only a few months in the year. What difficulties, if any, exist between Cradle Mountain and Marlborough I cannot say, but there are none north of that mountain. On the northern end of the Vale of Belvoir, near the Lake, we saw some large herds of Messrs. Fields’ cattle.

On the summit of Storm Mount (or Stormont) I found one of Mr. Hellyer’s old stations, and from this elevated point—about 4000 feet—had a complete view of the course of the River *Lea* of Hellyer (now called the Fall River), from its rise at the Vale of Belvoir to its junction with the Iris River, which flows through Middlesex Plains. The two, united, then flow through a rocky gorge, and become, I believe, the present River Wilmot. I followed the Iris until I saw the junction of the Lea, and thence northwards far beyond the position fixed for their junction with the Forth. Finding no indication of the River Iris trending eastward, I left it, and keeping a course south of east for about five miles, came upon the Forth N. W. by N. from Vandyke. There is an extensive flat of good but heavily timbered land above the junction of the Iris and Lea, but it is rather inaccessible. I also passed through a considerable extent of good land, covered with musk tree, &c., between the Iris and Forth.

River Forth, 22nd November, 1859.

SIR,

I BEG to call your particular attention to the following extensive districts of Crown Land, with a view to making them available by the opening up of roads to each from their respective shipping places. 1st. Between the Rivers Leven and Gawler. Here is a belt of land, at once extensive, of the very finest description, convenient to a shipping place, and easy of access, and extending south almost to the Surrey Hills. In a former Report of mine, sent to your Office, I stated, "this belt of land afforded every facility, was the natural highway, and ultimately would become the great highway across the Island, bearing south from the Leven, passing through or east of the Middlesex Plains."

This Report was grounded on actual observation, which has been since materially confirmed from observations taken during my late tour up the Wilmot, and from off the end or northern peak of the Dial Range, about eight or ten miles from the Coast. Between the Wilmot and Gawler, too, is an extensive tract of land similar to the one described, and only requires a road through it from Ulverstone.

In fine, this is the most convenient, the most extensive, and undoubtedly the most fertile tract of land in this District, and I believe not to be surpassed in the Island.

The opening of roads to these places will greatly promote the settlement of the District, and materially augment the Revenue.

I do not hereby mean to detract from the claims or merits of the Kentish District, which will no doubt more rapidly rise into importance than any other locality in the District, but ultimately will be much in the shade of the Leven District above alluded to by,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General.*

Mr. Joseph Fossey, Surveyor to the Van Diemen's Land Company in 1827, reports as follows on the lands to which the proposed road from Allison may at some future time be extended :—

The Vale of Belvoir next presents itself, bounded on the north by an arm of the Black Bluff, on the south by gently rising mounds,—with some extent of clear land running in a direction towards Mount Rolland. It has a large lake at the east end, with a fine rivulet meandering through its centre; and an indescribably beautiful waterfall on its south side, near the west end, completes the picture. It is from two to three miles long, and of considerable breadth.

Passing over a little heath, and some forest land, I came upon another part of the Surrey Hills, through which the Leven winds its course to the northward. I forded it, middle deep, at a point where it has two branches, and is about twenty yards wide. The country in the vicinity of this river is so admirably laid out by nature, that it assumes very much the appearance of a nobleman's domain,—both as to extent and good quality,—particularly that part lying to the east of the river. On west, it is of marshy description; yet not in the least degree objectionable on that account, inasmuch as it will furnish a profusion of feed, in the event of any particularly dry season occurring; and it lies well for drainage to the river and rivulets which intersect it, should such a measure at any future period be deemed expedient.

The Green Forest, which divides the Surrey from the Hampshire Hills, comprises myrtle, sassafras, celery-top pine, with a little stringy bark,—all of large circumference. There was also the pepper tree, and fern tree, with musk and dogwood; through which last it required great perseverance to penetrate; inasmuch, that I was reduced to crawl through it on my hands and knees; and even in this posture, all my efforts were necessary to extricate me from the trammels by which I was encompassed.

On the 5th I reached the Hampshire Hills, through the heart of which the Emu takes its course, in a northerly direction, to the coast near Round Hill. The land on the banks of this river—and of which there is a great extent running in a line for the Dial Mountains,—is similar, both in quality of soil and herbage, to that of the Garden Plain at Circular Head; and this remark will equally apply to the greater part of the clear lands throughout my route; the heaths of course excepted.

The weather being now exceedingly unpropitious, rather than enter Arden Forest under such unfavourable auspices, I remained on the hills,—chiefly subsisting on kangaroo thickened with a little flour (this being the most economical mode of extending the remains of that article), until Thursday, the 8th, when the wind veered from the N.W. to the south, and it became very clear and fine again. This induced me to proceed; and in three days I reached the coast, within about seven miles to the eastward of Table Cape, and between two or three to the westward of the River Cam, late the Emu.

The whole distance from the Hampshire Hills to the coast is forest; like the Green Forest before described, except two small plots of grassland, as noted in the sketch. A considerable portion of this forest is very flat and dry; and is as rich in soil as nature can well make it, and tolerably open to within about three miles of the coast; when immensely high fern, and much fallen timber, greatly obstructed my route.

Slate and freestone are both to be obtained in the neighbourhood of the Surrey Hills; the former upon the Heath, the latter at May-day Mount.

No. 3.

ROAD from Tarleton on the Mersey across the Don, through the Parish of Barrington, and to the Kentish Plains between the Don and Forth Rivers.

THE Northern Sub-Board of Works reported as follows on this Road in January, 1862 :—

“This Road is designed to give access to about 12,000 acres of really good crown land, of which about 2500 acres have already been taken up or applied for, and about 3000 more are surveyed and available for selection.”

Forth, 11th June, 1866.

SIR,

I BEG you will excuse my pertinacity if I again bring under your notice facts which I have on more than one occasion previously adverted to; viz —In the County of Devon, Parish of Barrington, is 15,000 acres of superior forest land, within an average distance of seven miles from the shipping place at the Mersey, which is the natural outlet for the area above referred to. About two-thirds has been taken up, the residue is available under the 18th and 19th Sections of *The Waste Lands Act*. The whole of this block is completely locked up for the want of a road. Many parties who have taken lands here are now fruitlessly endeavouring to cultivate, while others who tried the experiment have to their sorrow and detriment been obliged to abandon it.

Others are reluctantly obliged to defer such operations, and parties who would under other circumstances select from the residue of the available crown lands are deterred from doing so because there is no road.

A portion of the road in question has been partially opened by the Northern Sub-board of Works in rather a novel style, which I have no doubt would have terminated successfully had their funds only been able to support the structure. This work was begun at the top or south end, and terminated in or about the centre on the River Don, across which is a substantial bridge, doubtless indicating the will of the Board to complete this work had their funds permitted.

The revenue, the progress of settlement, and the various local interests, all are detrimentally affected, because the works once projected here have not been carried to a successful issue.

The quota contributed by this locality, under *The Waste Lands Act*, to the various Local Boards if judiciously applied here would give material relief.

But I am apprehensive from the constitution of these Boards, and the various demands upon their limited resources, relief from these quarters is hopeless.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JAMES M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General*.

River Mersey, 6th July, 1866.

SIR,

LAST August 1865, the residents and others interested in the opening of the road to Kentish Plains by way of the Don, through the Parish of Barrington, presented Petitions to Parliament through Sir R. Dry and Mr. J. Davies. The latter gentleman had an interview with one of the Members of the Government, and the answer was, that the matter should be looked into. I am requested to make an inquiry; and as I have some personal knowledge of yourself, I trust you will pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing you: I do so with a view to lay before you, as clearly as possible, the position of the whole question.

Some four or five years back, two lines of road were surveyed to Kentish, one by way of the Mersey (I will call it in contradistinction) to the other by way of the Don and Parish of Barrington. Tenders were invited for opening the road (I only now refer to Barrington Road) and accepted, which was commenced on the Township of Tarleton, was opened for some two or three miles, over good hard land on which was a good old road. From this point (three miles from Tarleton) towards the Don is the most impassable part of the road, and to a great extent we are trespassers as the road used is not on the marked line: sometimes we find a tree or two as a stoppage, and threats of a further stop to the road. Over the Don is erected a very good bridge. From this to Kentish through the before-mentioned Parish of Barrington the road is opened and bridges over the creek, with only a few exceptions, but is impassable otherwise. You will understand that the Don Bridge I refer to is about five or six miles from Tarleton. The Don is bridged again at Kentish. From the first Don Bridge there are settlers more or less to Kentish, and it is on their behalf I address you, as you will perceive there is virtually no road. I have been an eye-witness to difficulties encountered: a settler from up the country reached a few miles from Tarleton and was compelled to return with dray and horses,—another with chaise cart, after getting some distance, had to unharness the horse, pack-saddle some of their things, others were carrying boxes, &c., the women carrying babies.

I had a friend from Launceston wanting land, and would select in Barrington if the road was passable.

I have seen letters from India to relatives in Devon to select land in Tasmania, with instructions to improve, &c.; and as these parties are interested in Barrington, they are desirous their friends should be near them.

You will also see that the Road Trusts will not take charge of the road in question unless the Government will complete it. Appeals have been made for small amounts to make the road passable, but of no avail, they will not lay out one shilling, and the residents have paid road rates for years, and not a shilling advantage to them.

I know some settlers who have not carted their grain this year, others who have carted it by way of Kentish, a distance of ten miles extra, at an extra cost.

We think that the amount laid out will be of a reproductive character, by enabling the present selectors to pay their instalments as they become due, by being able to get their produce to market, and thus inducing their relatives and friends to join them, both in the Colonies, India, and from Home, increasing the sale of the lands, and augmenting the revenue of the Colony.

Apologising for trespassing upon your valuable time,

I remain,
Yours respectfully,

DAVID COCKER.

To the Hon. R. B. MILLER, Esq., Attorney-General.

No. 4.

ROAD from Hamilton-on-the-Forth to the Government Land at the Wilmot River, near Alma, and continuation of the same through Government Land.

THE Northern Sub-Board of Works in January, 1862, reported on this Road as follows :—

“The road thus proposed to be opened along the west bank of the Forth to Alma would, in addition to forming the outlet to the Kentish Track, at the same time give access to all the lands along the Valley of the Forth, and to an extensive tract of good Crown land lying between the Forth and Wilmot, which is estimated by Mr. Surveyor Dooley to be at least 10,000 acres. For another tract of land lying west of the Wilmot this road would also be the outlet.”

Forth, 11th June, 1866.

SIR,

A road from Hamilton-on-Forth to Alma along the west banks of the Forth has been projected by the Northern Sub-Board of Works, the contract let, and the work about half completed, the Contractor having failed to carry out his contract. Much work has been done to the road; many bridges of a neat and durable construction have been left in an incomplete state. In consequence of the work being left in this state, it is exposed and left to rapid deterioration.

The road, if completed, would be a good and level road; render communication with the Kentish practicable by fording the River; would open a considerable extent of Crown lands, and give access to many of the settlers on the west banks of the Forth.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JAMES M. DOOLEY, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General.*

No. 5.

ROAD South-east from Wivenhoe, Emu River.

The Northern Sub-Board of Works in January, 1862, report :—

“This, like all the other projected lines which run in a southerly direction on the table land between two rivers, would open up much good Crown Land. Mr. Surveyor Lette observes, that three lots amounting to 150 acres have been sold along this line, and 1500 acres in 16 lots have been marked off, all good land; leaving still available for sale at least 4000 to 5000 acres of the best quality.”

Mr. Surveyor Lette, 17th November, 1859, reports :—

“I have been about twelve miles south on the table land between the Blythe and Emu Rivers. It is much cut up by creeks and watersheds, and, as is usual with lands on the coast of much elevation, is generally good. After leaving Wivenhoe the land is of the richest description, covered with a heavy growth of underwood, and heavily timbered with gum, stringy bark, light, or blackwood, and myrtle (of the most useful kind), as indeed are all the good lands in the district.”

No. 6.

ROAD from Heybridge (River Blythe) Southwards for about 12 Miles.

The Northern Sub-Board of Works report, January, 1862 :—

“This proposed line may be said to run the whole way through Crown Land, inasmuch as the large portion already taken up has been so taken since the road was projected. Mr. Dooley says that this Road would open up 15,000 acres of good Crown Land, besides a large quantity of unknown quality.”

Mr. Dooley has lately reported that there are 30,000 acres of good land, and 8000 acres of medium.

REPORTS on the Crown Lands and proposed Roads in the County of Dorset.

No. 1.

Launceston, 1st May, 1866.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward to you the following Report of the Waste Lands in the Ringarooma portion of my Survey District, in which I have given an approximate estimate of the extent of agricultural land of the best quality, and also of that of the second best quality, which calculations are based partly on my own observations during explorations made by me at various times in different parts, and from information received from reliable sources.

That which I have designated the best quality is generally the richest description of agricultural land, usually what is termed chocolate-coloured soil, but in some cases partaking of a red colour, and in others varying from brown to a deep black, and usually of great depth. In some places these soils extend beyond the boundaries of my District, in which cases I have been careful to exclude from my estimate of areas all lands not within those boundaries, as also all purchased lots and lots surveyed under application to purchase but still the property of the Crown.

As you are pretty well acquainted with the kind of country I am treating of, as well as having seen portions of it, I deem it inexpedient to enter into a lengthy description of it or the forests which cover it. I presume it will be sufficient to say that it is all densely wooded country abounding in gum, stringybark, blackwood, wattle, dogwood, musk, and a variety of other trees, with an undergrowth of stinging-nettles (a distinguishing feature of rich soil), common ferns, fern trees, and various shrubs; the general character of its forests being less heavy, and consequently much more easily brought into cultivation than similar land in other parts.

Keeping strictly to the Ringarooma country, and relying on the data alluded to, I estimate the extent of agricultural land of the best quality at about thirty thousand (30,000) acres, and land of the second best quality at about thirty-eight thousand (38,000) acres.

The first-mentioned lands have given general satisfaction to all who have visited them: they are now attracting much attention from intending purchasers, and if made available by good roads will ere long form one of the finest and largest agricultural districts in the Colony. The roads now being made will give access to the central part of Ringarooma from Launceston, and the shipping place (Bridport) passing through the settlement of Scottsdale, and if completed will cause the sale of, and settlement upon, a large area of crown land in this part, in addition to the other lands they will give access to. It would be impossible to estimate the quantity of land likely to be purchased within a given time, as much will depend on the public works effected; but it is, nevertheless, reasonable to suppose that the area will be a large one, as so many persons are looking forward to making purchases, and as there is ample land for a large section of the community in every way suitable for selection, possessing rich soil in a mild climate, and watered by many streams capable of driving machinery.

The settlement of the Ringarooma country must enhance the value of the open country in its vicinity, of which there are many acres to the north, west, and south capable of grazing large flocks and herds, and I expect to see much of it occupied soon after settlement shall have commenced in earnest.

Some time ago, in endeavouring to trace the good land to its extent south of the upper part of the Ringarooma River, I came upon large open grassy plains, of granite formation, extending south-westerly from Mount Victoria. They are adapted for summer grazing, and useful for such purpose to the densely wooded lands contiguous to them. Although situated very high, the good land extends to them, and beyond them again succeeds alternate patches of poor and good land. On the occasion of my visit, shaping my course more to the west, I found the same description of country to continue north of Ben Nevis on to the head of the North Esk River, so that it became difficult to define the limits of the good land likely to be ultimately occupied.

The District possesses a large amount of useful timber of various kinds, principally hard woods, many of which are adapted for veneering.

A reference to the plans of this district will show that all the good lands next to the principal roads are taken up; and in many cases, where the surveyed lines of these lots can be readily followed by parties examining the land, lots at the back have been applied for. I find that, however anxious parties from town may be to accompany me into the bush in search of land, as soon as the extremity of a cleared track is reached, they decline following me farther; and the consequence is that, although they would become purchasers could they be induced to force their way through the scrubs to see such as I would show them, they leave without deciding upon making selections, and ultimately change their intentions of doing so. Nothing else can be expected from the majority of persons unaccustomed to densely wooded country. I would here deferentially suggest the expediency of having either a foot or horse-track cut from "Branxholm," (Mr. J. R. Scott's Estate on the Ringarooma River), in a N.N.E. direction for several miles through the good land in that part, to facilitate the examination of it by intending selectors; the result of which, I believe, would be the purchase of much land in that part, and without which, I am afraid, parties will not easily be induced to penetrate.

I do myself the honor to forward herewith a plan indicating the different qualities of the soils by colours.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JOHN R. HURST, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General,*
Hobart Town.

No. 2.

Launceston, 1st May, 1866.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to report the existence of about fifteen thousand (15,000) acres of generally good land in the vicinity of the Township of Springfield, in the County of Dorset, as represented by colour on the plan forwarded herewith.

It is generally timbered with gum, dogwood, and fern-tree. It is watered by the Brid and Forester's Rivers, and numerous small streams.

I believe the land suitable for selection, and from its position with regard to Scottsdale, Bridport, and the road now being opened through it from Launceston, much of it is likely to be taken up in the ordinary way as soon as I have an opportunity (which will shortly occur) of taking intending selectors into it.

There are other spots of good land surrounding the Settlement of Scottsdale, but, being isolated and of small areas, I do not consider them of sufficient importance just now for special report.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

JOHN R. HURST, *District Surveyor.*

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General,*
Hobart Town.

No. 3.

Launceston, 14th April, 1866.

SIR,

I BEG to submit for your consideration the following remarks regarding the crown lands near Springfield and the Ringarooma.

1st. The land from Springfield on both sides of the road, and for some miles back through Scottsdale, having been now all selected, speaks for the quality of that portion, being a distance of about ten miles. This still leaves a large area of excellent land surrounding Springfield, extending to the south and west to the St. Patrick's River, and the lots selected at the head of the Patersonia Rivulet, a radius of about five miles in distance; at present quite unknown to the public from the want of access to these dense scrubs, but which must eventually have an important influence on the

trade of Launceston when occupied, as Springfield and the country around it will bear the same position to the east of Launceston as Deloraine now does to the westward of it.

Springfield Reserve is not yet defined. On this ground, therefore, I would suggest that 320 acres, including both sides of the Brid River, will be ample as the Township. This would enable small selections to be taken near the road, and tend to settle that part sooner than if a larger area was reserved: also, that several lots (say twenty), not under one acre each, might be offered for sale as soon as the road there is cleared, the remainder of the old reserve of 1200 acres thrown open for selection, but not surveyed until actually selected.

Springfield will afford a most convenient place for travellers and others in selecting land in the vicinity to start from.

2nd. The good land on the Ringarooma River is found to be more extensive than was reported by me on 15th November, 1859, not being then thoroughly explored. The best track extends from the south of Maurice Reserve to near Mount Cameron, a distance of about twenty miles, in a direct line of rich chocolate soil; and outside of this area is a very large quantity of good soil fit to become pasture land, but being covered by scrubs and ferns is at present almost impenetrable. Few venture into the scrubs to see the soil in case of being lost,—hence the urgent necessity of opening cheap horse tracks into these good lands (probably to the extent of 30,000 acres) before the same can be disposed of; yet, with such tracks as now exist, the quantity of land selected proves the desire of people to locate there,—and as the money for opening the roads from Patersonia to the Ringarooma has been granted, I strongly recommend that the road from Springfield to Parr's Rivulet should be cleared and opened out, as it will tend to a considerable area of crown land being selected: it will be easily kept in repair when made, and be the main thoroughfare to the Ringarooma Country and beyond it.

During the last twelve months upwards of 1000 acres have been selected in the vicinity of Springfield, and above 3000 on the Ringarooma River; but it is impossible to foresee the impetus which will be given to these Districts, and the amount of land selected, when the roads are made: it may be fairly estimated at three times the area of any former years.

3rd. I consider a horse track opened from near Bulman's Farm to the north of the present road, and also a track up the St. Patrick's River, would open up a large area, and be the means of settling that country.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES SCOTT, *Surveyor*.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General,*
Hobart Town.

No. 4.

Launceston, 7th May, 1866.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to forward herewith a rough sketch illustrating the position of some Ten thousand acres of good land situate in the County of Dorset. It is some years since I crossed it, and have before mentioned its existence in former reports. A fine stream runs through it, on each side of which there is a considerable quantity of marsh land, which I imagine would be well suited for grazing purposes, and could be easily improved for that purpose by burning and other means. On either side of the marsh I noticed there was a large amount of red soil of the best description, which I have estimated at about Ten thousand acres. I believe by extending the line of road now in course of construction from the Ringarooma River to this land, a distance of about nine or ten miles, would be sufficient to ensure the sale of the whole of it in a few years; but if it did not find purchasers under the 19th Section, it would soon be disposed of if surveyed into Agricultural Areas.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

RICHARD HALL.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq., Surveyor-General,*
Hobart Town.

Fingal, 12th February, 1858.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to report, for your information, the result of my exploration of the country situated between the South Esk River and Cape Portland; and also to forward a rough plan, which exhibits in a more direct manner the course of my party, together with an approximation of the natural features and character of the land.

Referring to your letter of the 10th December, 1857, I felt assured that the block which you recommended for examination would require a more extended period than I could well spare at one time. In carrying out a service of this kind, the unavoidable delays in procuring rations, &c., in consequence of the disconnected nature of the country, and the impracticability of using either horses or bullocks as a means of transport, prove the greatest drawback. I therefore determined to examine that portion of the block accessible from the South Esk, reserving for a future occasion the remaining portion in the neighbourhood of Row-Tor and Mount Barron.

On the 18th of January, accompanied by my pupil, Mr. Bradbury, and two men, I left the neighbourhood of Fingal, carrying with us fourteen days' rations, which I considered amply sufficient to enable us to reach Cape Portland. It was a source of much regret to me that I was unable to bring bullocks with the party, as it necessarily narrowed the sphere of my operations.

On Tuesday, the 19th instant, I started from the white hut on the Black Boy Plains, from which the summit of Mount Victoria is distinctly visible, bearing about N. 30° W. Crossing the South Esk, my course lay through the valley of a rivulet shown on the plan. For some distance, until the spurs of the Black Boy Sugar-loaf were crossed, the land was poor, an admixture of clay and sand, with the native hop growing in great profusion.

Leaving the Black Boy the character of the ground improved rapidly, large gum and fern trees abounded, and a rich vegetable mould of considerable depth constituted the soil.

There is an extensive basin lying between Mount Saddleback and Mount Victoria, a large proportion of which is quite level, and equal to any land I have seen in the colony; it is by no means so heavily timbered as the same description of land at the Huon, and could be cleared much more easily, as everything but the standing trees could be removed by fire.

On the 21st instant I ascended Mount Victoria, by the roughest side unfortunately: a thick scrub extended to the top, rendering a cleared track necessary. I was disappointed in being unable to obtain a satisfactory view of the country from the summit: the smoke from the bush fires, which were burning in every direction, quite obscured every distant object. Towards George's Bay and the Bay of Fires alternate marsh and forest land stretched away as far as the eye could reach, but neither showed, in my judgment, any indication of being valuable.

The tier connecting Mount Victoria with the head of the Ringarooma River (the valley of which I could discern plainly) exhibited a large plateau on the top, extending for miles without break or undulation; the greater part of it was plain or marsh land. On all sides the descent into the lowlands was steep, with bold bluffs running out at intervals.

The Mount Cameron range appeared to rise from the midst of a level tract, which extended for a considerable distance on all sides: between it and the Bay of Fires there is but little rising ground, none of any elevation.

Mount Victoria is a narrow and irregular ridge of coarse sandstone, about the third of a mile in length. The bunch of poles which forms the trigonometrical object is still standing.

I crossed the large table land observed from Mount Victoria: poor sandy marshes, with myrtle forests intervening, was the character of the land. I observed no grass, except in one or two spots. The tufty *Gymnoschenes* was the only vegetation.

Every portion of the tract from my starting point to the Ringarooma River is well watered; every creek we passed, even the smallest, was running, though rain had not fallen for a considerable period.

The descent into the valley of the Ringarooma was rapid; the side of the tier was remarkably steep, and covered with an almost impenetrable scrub, one of the worst I ever experienced.

The land was of excellent quality, but I doubt if it could ever be made available. About a mile from the river the ground became more open, and granite boulders appeared for the first time.

I arrived at the River on the 24th instant, meeting it about two hundred yards above the junction with the Maurice Rivulet, the point which I endeavoured to make.

I had no difficulty in finding Mr. Scott's track, which has been recently re-marked by Mr. Gwynne. I proceeded by it to the latter gentleman's camp, through very excellent land, which is I believe secured under the Regulations of 1851. I crossed the river at the camp, and directed my course so as to cut off a large bend which terminates the surveyed position of the River: this bend has but little land fit for anything; open rocky (granite) hills form the greater part of it; neither did there appear any bottom land close to the river.

From the extremity of this bend the north bank of the river for miles is bounded by myrtle forests; on the other side a rocky and barren tier runs sheer down into the river for about two miles, when both sides assume the same features.

The hills which bound the river are neither lofty nor steep, with a considerable extent of level land on the top; the soil is rich in the extreme. There was not much scrub so called, and little large timber; but the ferns grew with a profusion I never saw elsewhere, the common *Pteris*, or bush fern, abounded, but almost every species of that order of plants was represented.

The former attained a height of fully ten feet, and were entwined with stinging nettles equally luxuriant, so that I was obliged occasionally to diverge and seek a more agreeable style of country.

I followed the river until the 27th inst., when I found that, owing to the windings of its course, many of which I was unable to cut off in consequence of there having been no survey of the river, that I was losing time.

I also was unable to walk on the hills and keep the valley of the stream in view, owing to the fern scrub which clothed all the high grounds.

I determined, therefore, to leave the river and cross to the mouth of the Ringarooma, through the opening between Mount Cameron and Mount Horror; the latter mountain I never saw until I reached the coast. From my position with respect to Mount Cameron, when I first sighted it, and taking into consideration the distance I had travelled from the river, I am satisfied that the course of the Ringarooma is much further to the eastward than is shown on the tracing which was furnished to me by the Department.

The ridge between the Rivers Ringarooma and Little Boobyalla is by no means high. There was abundance of excellent land: a large portion of it covered with ferns, with no other description of tree, will prove valuable at no distant period.

The descent to the Coast, leaving Mount Cameron on the right hand, is easy in the extreme; there is not what might be called a gully for six or seven miles behind Mount Cameron to the Township Reserve of Ringarooma, so that a road to open up this portion of the country could be made with great facility. The country is open from the point where the land ceases to be of good quality; it is of a peaty nature, and only adapted for pasturage. A few spots of good land exist nearer to the Boobyalla River according to the statement of one of the shepherds.

The land did not improve for some miles. When within a short distance of the Coast I crossed a fine alluvial flat, which extended on both sides of the river. How far the same description of land is to be met with on the east bank, above Mr. Foster's grant, I am unable to say, but I apprehend that there is a quantity of available land in that quarter.

The reserve of Ringarooma is a succession of sandhills. I saw no land of any value on the Township, except it may exist at the mouth of the Little Boobyalla River.

From Ringarooma to Charmouth it is of precisely similar character. At the latter reserve there is some land adapted for cultivation on the point where the volcanic rock crops out.

I reached Cape Portland on the 30th instant, being the twelfth day of the trip.

I met with a disappointment in being unable to obtain a barometer, my own instrument having met with an accident; I cannot, therefore, give any information as to the elevations of the various localities. I feel that this is an important deficiency, but I had no anticipation, up to the last moment, of being obliged to proceed without one.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

WM. ALCOCK TULLY, *Surveyor*.

The Surveyor-General, Hobart Town.

No. 6.

Launceston, 15th November, 1859.

SIR,

IN connection with my letter of the 9th instant, I beg to submit the following Report as to the available land fit for agricultural purposes, or as small farms, to the north east of this; viz., from the lots selected near Pattersonia Rivulet and St. Patrick's River to those in the vicinity of the Great Forester's River, there are at least 25,000 acres of dense scrubs, but good soil. That on the Ringarooma River, near the lots already taken, there are at least an equal area of the best soil, both south and north towards Mount Horror. That to the north east of Piper's River and north of Row Tor, skirting the base of the mountains in a distance of 20 miles, there are at least 20,000 acres of good land.

It is said that the table land between the Ringarooma River and the Anson's River is the place where wild cattle were seen by Count Strzeleckie on his crossing the country there. This table land, I believe, would be found fit for summer runs, but at present it is quite unknown and inaccessible from want of a road to it.

Two such lines, of a distance of about 60 and 40 miles respectively, would open the whole of that quarter, both to sell that fit for cultivation, and leasing that for grazing.

The land to the north east of Piper's River. The present road to Piper's River through Lot 998, a distance of about one mile, is up a rocky rise, known as the "Finger-post Hill," and is unsafe for any carriage except a strong bullock dray; so much so that it has deterred several parties going there to look at the land. Therefore I would recommend that the present road there should be made safe and passable; also a bridge over Piper's River north of the Brown Mountain, and one other bridge over a second branch about one mile further to the east, and a track opened,—this would give access to all that quarter, as well as to the land on the coast. A road cleared for 15 or 20 miles in length there, I consider, would be sufficient in the first instance.

Many applicants for land through me are prevented from selecting solely from want of roads.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JAMES SCOTT.

J. E. CALDER, *Esq.*, *Surveyor-General.*

No. 7.

Dorset Road Trust, 18th August, 1866.

SIR

The Piper's River Road west has lately been proclaimed a Cross Road leading from the George Town Road to the new Settlement on government land, where the population is almost daily increasing.

Several of the bridges and culverts leading to this Settlement on to Turner's Marsh have been lately washed away, cutting off the communication with Launceston. The present road is a mere track from which the trees have not been cut away, rocks removed, or side or check drains made to keep off the surface water.

The amount required to perform these works will be from £500 to £600.

From the above road at the top of Finger-post Hill diverges another road leading over the bridge of the Piper, a little below Grubb & Tyson's saw-mill, on to the eastern Settlement on the Piper through government lands to Bridport on the North Coast. The requirements will be something similar to the before-mentioned road, and will take from £400 to £500 to clear from dead timber, cut down and remove trees from the road, remove rocks, drain when required, and make the same passable for the Settlers in winter.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. M. MILLIGAN, *Chairman.*W. R. FALCONER, *Esq.*, *Director of Public Works,*
Hobart.

Launceston, 18th August, 1866.

DEAR SIR,

In July last I addressed a letter to you with reference to the importance of improving the road from Launceston to Patersonia, but (in consequence of the same having been thrown out of Parliament last year by the Northern members) without effect.

I have now to request your attention to other roads in the County of Dorset to which the same objections are not applicable; viz.—the roads leading from Launceston to Piper's River.

I understand from the selectors of land in the vicinity of Piper's River, that they have applied to the Government, either by letter or petition, to have their roads put into such a state as to be fit and safe for cart traffic. I beg to state that, when most of the owners of land there selected, it was fully believed by them that a good road would be made by the Government. As Mr. Hall, the District Surveyor, was employed by the Government of the day in making out the road leading from Launceston to the coast, by way of Piper's River, through some of the selections, and as most of the selections were made through me, I informed the applicants that such roads were in contemplation; and about the beginning of 1861 tenders were called for by Government for clearing the said roads leading to Bridport by way of Piper's River, which road has since been cleared of scrubs and logs, but not formed or levelled fit for carts. I therefore consider it desirable that this should be pointed out to you, that justice may be done those who selected on the faith of having the road really made passable, and not left in a *half-finished state*,—in fact almost useless for traffic, except by horses only.

Launceston is the only market open for the settlers on Piper's River; and some have actually left their lands in consequence of Government not having completed these roads; therefore at least £1500 to £2000 should be given to make them passable, as both the town and the country would derive a great advantage from the number of small settlers there having a tolerable road to bring their produce to market.

Yours very truly,

JAMES SCOTT.

W. R. FALCONER, Esq.,
Director of Public Works, Hobart Town.

EXTRACTS from the Report of Mr. CHARLES GOULD, Government Geologist, 18th July, 1864.

THE existing lines of road, independent of the circuitous route by way of the Piper and Coast, are three: the first, a road surveyed by Mr. Hall, running from Tyson's saw-mill and terminating in the Coast road, about half a mile from the west bank of the Little Forester River; the second, starting from Patersonia, and terminating in Ringarooma. The third leading from Bridport to Scott's New Country, and thence into the second or Mr. Gordon Burgess's Road. There is also an unsurveyed track leading from Boone's selection in Scott's New Country to Mr. Scott's land at Ringarooma.

Mr. Hall's road is $33\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length, and passes through the occupied lands near the head of the Piper River, and through the rich scrub land on the summit of the tier to the north of it: of this land but little is selected, and only one selection occupied. I estimate that at least 5000 acres of good land would be opened up at once by this road being made practicable for carts to a shipping place; at present it is only available for horses. The distance of the occupied selection (Chester's) from Launceston is 23 miles,—from Bridport about the same. I am unable to say what the relative expenses of forming the road in the two directions might be; but one advantage is certainly possessed by the northern half of the road, in the fact that no hills are encountered after the descent of the tier, so that the carriage of all produce would be down-hill to the port, whereas towards Launceston the road passes over several difficult hills of considerable height. In fact, the first part of the road needs only a few variations, and a moderate expenditure for side cuttings, to render it passable at once: the complete formation of the road might be deferred until the land had been occupied, and to some extent cultivated.

A larger area, difficult of definition, would also eventually be occupied lying along the northern flanks of the tier, and on its summit.

In Scott's New Country the majority of the good land is already selected,—that which remains is chiefly to the south and south west: the occupation of this would be promoted by the construction of the road surveyed by Mr. Hall from Bonner's selection to Bridport,—the only expense necessary being for bridging a few creeks and corduroying the soft places. Upon the north and west the unoccupied lands are barren and heathy, and composed of granite grit: upon the south east and south the scrub merges into second-class forest land of fair value: upon the south west there is a small area of basaltic land, which is as usual first-rate, and the country fringing the base of the Blue Sugar-loaf to some extent, and its flanks consist of heavily scrubbed land of moderate value. If these lands were isolated they might possibly remain unoccupied, but situated as they are with respect to the rapidly rising settlement of Scott's New Country they must soon attain value.

The finest land cannot be estimated at less than 2000 acres, and that of second-class value would probably amount to 5000 also. The amount of first-class land known to me at Ringarooma is about 16,000 acres (including sold and unsold land). The amount of second-class land may be estimated at 10,000 acres. A large area of fine land is also reported by Mr. Tully as existing to the north and east of that included in the present map. As bearing upon the hitherto unoccupied condition of the land at Ringarooma, I cannot refrain from quoting a passage written by Count Strzelecki more than twenty years since. He says,—" *Those who sell a property should find means of rendering it accessible to those who buy it: they should, in good policy, render it accessible even to those who wish to examine it, whereby much valuable land would be disposed of which, for want only of the means of access, remains on the hands of the Government.*" The land at Ringarooma affords an apt illustration of the justice of this remark. A district capable of producing grain to the value (at a very low estimate) of £100,000 annually, or, if laid down in grass, of depasturing at the least 100,000 sheep, has remained for years unsold and unoccupied, although to some extent surveyed, and for a long time submitted for private selection or public competition; and this in the face of the land being of the finest quality, and on the whole so little encumbered with scrub, that the cost of clearing would not exceed one half of that incurred in Scott's New Country. The deterring cause has been the impossibility of exporting produce, the only outlet being by means of a circuitous bush track, crossing the high range separating it from Scott's New Country, narrow, unlevelled, and unbridged, dangerous to horses and impassable for drays. As, however, the most desirable route of communication between the lands at Ringarooma and Scott's New Country will be made the subject of a special Report from Mr. Thomas, I feel it unnecessary to dwell further on this subject; but I would add, that as the natural outlet from the Southern part of the district appears to be to Bridport *via* Scott's New Country, so that of the Northern end is along Mr. Gordon Burgess's track towards Ringarooma.