

(No. 105.)



1876.

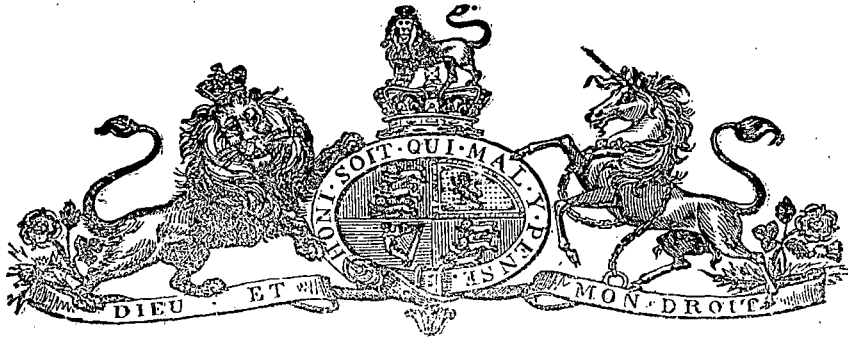
T A S M A N I A.

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

DORSET ROAD DISTRICT.

**REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PETITION FROM
RATEPAYERS, WITH EVIDENCE.**

Brought up by Mr. Douglas, and ordered by the House of Assembly to be printed,
October 26, 1876.



REPORT of Select Committee on Petition from Ratepayers, Dorset Road District.

Your Committee have the honor to report that they have carefully considered the matter referred to them; and find that the first allegation of the Petition,—that the Trustees of the Dorset Road District have held office “in consequence of your Petitioners not having been afforded any opportunity of electing other Trustees in their stead,”—is not proved, inasmuch as Trustees were elected in the year 1875, and, but for an error in advertisement, would have been elected in 1876. That no Rate has been levied since 1869. That, with the exception of one Trustee who resides in the midst of the Petitioners, the Trustees occupy premises in the immediate vicinity of the Main Road. That the roads in the immediate neighbourhood of the Petitioners are not in good order; but your Committee also find that the Trustees have expended on the roads leading to the properties of the Petitioners a full and fair share of the moneys raised by the tolls: for it appears from the evidence taken that the sum of £1042 15s. 10d. has been expended during the last six years on the Main Road, and the sum of £956 9s. 6d. on the roads leading to Petitioners' properties, while a rate of one shilling (if levied) on the properties of the Road District would amount to only from £180 to £200, and of this amount a sum not exceeding £12 9s. would be contributed by the properties of the Petitioners and their immediate vicinity.

The roads in the District appear to be kept in repair solely by tolls raised at the Invermay Toll-bar; and your Committee are of opinion that it would be of no practical advantage to the Petitioners if a rate were levied.

The Evidence taken by your Committee is hereunto annexed.

ADYE DOUGLAS, *Chairman.*

Committee Room, 26th October, 1876.

EVIDENCE.

WEDNESDAY, 25TH OCTOBER, 1876.

The Honorable W. D. GRUBB examined.

Mr. Grubb states:—

I am Chairman of the Dorset Road Trust, and one of the Trustees. I have been a Trustee for nearly 20 years.

The last election of Trustees took place on 21st April, 1875, at which date five parties were nominated as Trustees, three of them being new men, and two old Trustees. One new Trustee was elected, and the two old Trustees were re-elected.

No election has been held for 1876, because there was an informality in the notice of the meeting. We had to apply to the Government for an extension of time for the election, and an error of “Monday” for “Saturday” in the *Gazette* notice rendered it again informal.

A Road Rate was last imposed in 1869. At that time the whole rate at 6d. in the £ only realised £91 odd. No Road Rate has been imposed since then, as we make the tolls do the repairs, and continue such works as the Trustees consider necessary. That toll is now £300 a year.

The Dorset Toll-gate is almost on the present boundary of Launceston Town, but when it was first erected it was nearly a mile from the boundary.

There are now mortgages on the tolls; one of £1000 raised in July, 1870, at 7 per cent., and a previous one in 1864 of £500, which is now at 6 per cent. The mortgage of £1000 was negotiated at a premium of $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

The whole of the money expended by the Trustees on the several roads since 1870 is as follows:—

	1871.	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Main Road.....	586 12 5	245 7 11	70 8 0	29 9 9	35 8 6	75 9 3
Piper's River Road.	196 9 1	441 3 1	21 9 0	39 14 6 11 10 0	51 14 6	99 1 9
Vermont Road	29 11 0	29 9 2	9 19 0	—	1 0 0	1 16 6
Allan Vale Road ...	4 14 0	28 11 3	—	—	4 3 6	—
Windermere Road .	3 3 0	—	62 3 0	—	5 18 0	—
Dilston Bridge	15 0 0	—	60 0 0	73 12 6	—	—

Since that time Piper's River Road has had £95 7s. 7d., and contracts are still outstanding for £26 more for the present year.

The Dilston Bridge forms a part of the Main Line of Road in Dorset Road District.

In 1872 part of the money was expended on the portion of road near Finger-post Hill, where the road was nearly impassable.

When any Trustee brings under the notice of the Trust that any road requires money to be spent upon it, the Trust always gives due consideration to the representation.

The Piper's River Road means two roads, one to Turner's Marsh, and the other to the Upper Piper River.

(The list of names to the Petition having been submitted to the Witness)—

I know a good many of these persons. They are small holders on Lower Piper. I cannot say how much has been expended since 1870 in this neighbourhood, but very little on Turner's Marsh Road as compared with the others. It would require the whole of the money to be expended on the road to enable the people to get a loaded dray to Launceston in winter. The roads were formerly much worse than they are now. We used to pay £12 a ton for cartage even on that short road.

All the Crown land around is bad.

A Trustee lives near the Petitioners.

No Road Rate has been levied since 1869, because we had found the collection at the Toll-gate sufficient.

The larger proprietors reside on or near the Main Line of Road to George Town, which is in pretty good order. Money is constantly laid out on it. There is good gravel near it the greater part of the distance.

On the other line of road there is also plenty of ironstone metal, but it is not broken.

I consider that more than a fair share of the proportion of road money arising from the tolls has been expended on the Petitioners' road. The amount they pay for tolls is very little,—about £10 a year, and only at harvest time. All people pay at the Toll-gate. If a rate of a shilling in the pound was levied on these people, I can give you the amount which would be realised, which would be about £12 9s.

The Petitioners have not complained to the Trustees of money not having been spent on their road.

By Mr. Scott.—I do not know what amount the Board of Works have spent on the Petitioners' road.

By Mr. Riddoch.—They can come to the Government under the 14th Clause of "Waste Lands Act."

By Chairman.—At the time of raising the loan proceedings were taken under "The Cross and Bye Roads Act." I have no doubt of it. When we levied a Rate we resolved to spend it as fairly as possible according to the amount raised in each locality.

I consider the Toll-gate system a fair one.

It would be absurd to place a Toll-gate where the toll collected would not pay a Collector's wages; but here we get a fair sum.

It would not be fair for the Launceston people to put up a Toll-gate on the George Town Road between the Dorset Gate and the Bridge. They derive a benefit from the country people coming into town for supplies; and I do not believe the toll makes any difference in their charges for their produce.

The tolls of the Dorset Gate are let yearly by auction. It has let for more than it at present realises. We once got £385 for it by auction.

By Mr. Riddoch.—A shilling rate for the whole District would bring in from £180 to £200.

We have about fifty miles of road under the Trust.