

(No. 74.)



1874.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MAIN LINE RAILWAY ROUTE.

PETITION FROM BRIGHTON, GREEN PONDS, BOTHWELL, AND
OATLANDS.

Presented by Mr. Maclanachan, September 15; and ordered by the Council
to be printed, September 17, 1874.



*To the Honorable the President and the Honorable the Members of the
Legislative Council of Tasmania, in Parliament assembled.*

The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Municipalities of Brighton, Green Ponds, Bothwell, and Oatlands.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH :

THAT the first Clause of the 3rd Section of the Main Line of Railway Amendment Act, 34th of Victoria, No. 13, provides that, in the Contract to be made between the Governor and a Company willing to undertake the construction of a Main Line of Railway from Hobart Town to Launceston, "provision shall be made, amongst other things, for compelling the Company to construct the said Railway by a route which shall keep as near as may be practicable to existing centres of population."

That such proviso was contained in the Contract entered into by the present Main Line Railway Company.

That these "existing centres of population" have been defined by the Honorable the Attorney-General, in his evidence before a Select Committee of your Honorable House, to be the settled Districts along the main line of road; in which evidence he says, "The Government would not have sanctioned the Contract by the Jerusalem route if a line could have been found along the main line of road, only on its being shown that Wylie's route was impracticable."

That the late Mr. Wylie was the Engineer appointed by the Main Line Railway Company to define a line for the construction of a Railway from Hobart Town to Launceston in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Parliament relating thereto. That he did so is proved by a Prospectus, to which a Map was attached, issued by the Directors of the Company in London in March, 1872, in which Prospectus it is stated that "the Line of Railway will pass through the Townships of Bridgewater, Pontville, Melton Mowbray, Spring Hill, Anstey Barton, Oatlands," &c.; and that "the accompanying Map will show that it traverses the centres of trade and population of the Colony."

That in consequence of the death of the late Mr. Wylie another Engineer was appointed by the Company to superintend the construction of the Railway in accordance with the terms of the Contract already signed. After a cursory examination of the route marked out upon the Map attached to the Prospectus issued by the Company, this Engineer abandoned that route upon the plea of its impracticability; and the reason assigned by the said Engineer to the Chairman of the Company for such abandonment, as publicly stated by the Chairman himself, was the "unheard of floods" which compelled him to take the high land.

That your Petitioners would respectfully state that Wylie's line has been proved beyond doubt by competent Engineers to be a practicable line, and one that can be constructed at a cost not exceeding the cost of the line adopted by the Company from Bridgewater to York Plains, and that it "would give as satisfactory results."

That the evidence taken before the Royal Commission appointed by the Government in 1868 proved that "a route away from the main line of road would destroy the trade of the townships on that road."

That the Contract was for a Railway by Wylie's, which was laid out "as near as practicable to existing centres of population" within the meaning of the Act of Parliament and marked out on the Company's Map. The Main Line Railway Company have constructed their line by a different route away from those "existing centres of population," and will thereby "destroy the trade of the townships," and seriously depreciate the value of all property along that part of the main line of road between Pontville and Oatlands.

Your Petitioners therefore earnestly pray that your Honorable House will take into consideration the alteration made by the Railway Company in the route; and if you are of opinion that the late Mr. Wylie's line was the one contracted for, that you will take such steps as you may consider necessary to cause the Honorable the Attorney-General to take proceedings under the 6th Section of the Main Line Railway Amendment Act against the said Company for a breach of the conditions of the said Contract.

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

[Here follow 102 Signatures.]