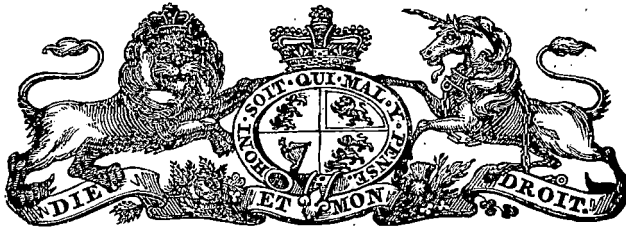


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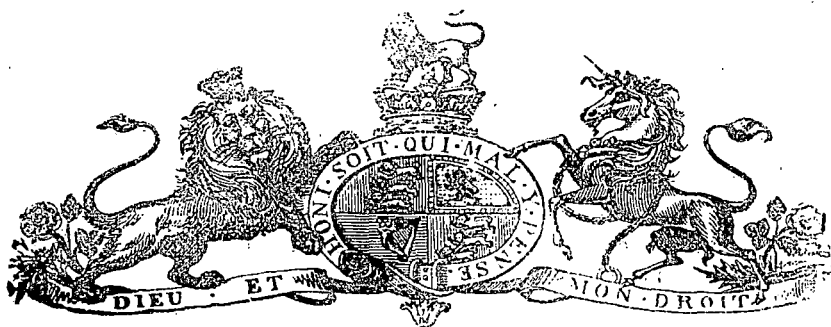
1885.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

**SITE FOR A STORE ON THE ESPLANADE
AT FORMBY:**

**CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND
MESSRS. HOWARD SMITH & CO.**

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, and ordered by the House of
Assembly to be printed, November 4, 1885.



Market-street, Melbourne, 26th October, 1885.

SIR,

WE have the honor to address you in reference to our application for a lease of land at the Formby Esplanade on which to erect a store for the accommodation of the traffic which we load and discharge at that port.

The application was made on our authority by Mr. Maurice Nathan, our representative at Latrobe, on 15th May last, and we have to express our regret that it did not receive your favourable consideration, as conveyed in your letter to Mr. Nathan dated 17th July, particularly as the grounds of your refusal are not apparent either to ourselves or to any of the residents at Formby whose opinions have reached us.

We have now the honor to renew our application, for the reasons hereafter stated, which, we trust, will commend themselves to your consideration, and induce you to alter your decision:—

- 1st. Because the store accommodation which we desire to provide is a public want, there being nothing of the kind provided by your Government, the store which at present exists being monopolised by two companies and those who trade with them.
- 2nd. Because the withholding of lease and delay on the part of your Government to provide the required storage is an injustice to the port, it being next to impossible to conduct a steamship service with any degree of satisfaction without having sheds or stores in which to receive and from which to deliver cargo.
- 3rd. Because the service which we have established between Melbourne and Formby is a public boon; is recognised as such by the inhabitants of the North-West Coast, and has been availed of by your Government for the carrying of supplementary mails, thus increasing public convenience generally. This latter feature should, we contend, appeal to you strongly in favour of granting our request, as without the necessary conveniences for the conduct of our business it will be impossible to continue the service.
- 4th. Because we are willing to pay a fair rental for the land we seek to lease; to comply with the regulations of your Government in every respect; and to spend a considerable sum of money in the erection of buildings, &c., thereby improving the port.

Speaking generally, we were not prepared for the rejection of our application. At all other ports to which we have extended our operations we have experienced little difficulty in securing the accommodation we required, the authorities showing a disposition to encourage our enterprise by affording us the necessary facilities.

The Tasmanian Press and the community generally admit that the means of communication which we supply fills a public want, and we had looked for encouragement from your Government rather than a refusal to concede the ordinary conveniences for our trade.

The public press has on more than one occasion noticed the disadvantages under which we labour, and we are confident that few of the residents in the district,—outside those who are specially interested in driving us from your coasts,—would be found to raise objection to our securing the accommodation we have asked.

We cannot help contrasting our position with that of the holders of the store known as "Griffith's Store."

We offer to pay a fair rental, whereas Griffith's Store returns no revenue to your Department, the nominal rent of 20s. per annum never having been paid. The terminating of the lease for this store cannot, we submit, serve the public interest, and, in our opinion, it is scarcely fair to us to hang the refusal to grant us a lease upon the slender thread of a remote possibility such as this; and, further, we have good grounds for suggesting that, in connection with that particular lease, there has been shown a desire to accommodate the proprietors such as we have not yet experienced in our attempts to obtain similar facilities.

We now beg leave to submit the foregoing arguments for your consideration, and, having in your view the prosperity of the people and the development of the resources of the district, we trust you will grant our request, and thus prevent the port of Formby from being deprived of a service which, considering the short time it has been in existence, has given public satisfaction, and which, under ordinarily favourable circumstances, would go a long way to materially benefit the inhabitants of at least a portion of your Island.

We may add that the apparent indifference to our wants which has characterised the replies to our Agent's application for the accommodation has scarcely been in keeping with the spirit of federation and mutual concession which is just now understood to be animating our respective communities.

Waiting the favour of your reply,

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

For and on behalf of WM. HOWARD SMITH & SONS, *Limited,*

BRUCE SMITH, *Managing Director, Melbourne.*

To the Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works, Hobart.

4th November, 1885.

SIRS,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th October, renewing your application for a lease of land on the Esplanade at Formby, on which you propose to erect a store.

You will pardon me for observing that you appear to be under a misapprehension on two or three important points as to which you have thought proper to comment adversely upon the course adopted by the Tasmanian Government. You observe that you "cannot help contrasting your position with that of the holders of the store known as Griffith's store." You can scarcely be unaware of the fact that Griffith's store was erected 16 years ago, and for a particular purpose, and that if an application were now made to rent land and erect a store in the position in which that store now stands it would not be entertained for a moment, and the question of resuming possession of that land, and ordering the removal of the store, is only in abeyance, and will be decided whenever it appears that the public interests require its removal. It would appear only reasonable that parties requiring to trade to the Mersey should do what is done in other ports, viz., purchase land and erect thereon such stores of a permanent character as may be suitable for their purpose. A very cursory consideration of the matter, if such consideration were given in a fair and impartial spirit without regard to your own particular interests, would convince you that, in view of the inconvenience which may hereafter arise to the public interests, the Government are perfectly justified in refusing to place in private hands the right to occupy exclusively any portion of the Esplanade which may in future be required for general wharf purposes. I may add that, as far as the Government are concerned, you do not in the least strengthen your position by the appeal to public opinion in order to bring pressure to bear upon the Government, which is implied in some portions of your letter, and which is plainly indicated by your having handed to the Press of the Colony a copy of your letter for publication before it was possible for a reply from the Government to be forwarded to you.

I regret that the Government are unable to comply with your request, and trust that you will be able to make other arrangements suitable for your purpose, and that the trade from the Mersey through your means may be much extended. This Government feel assured that such a result will certainly follow the agreement to the Reciprocity Treaty between Tasmania and Victoria, to the arrangements of which they have given their most earnest efforts.

I have the honor to be,

Sirs,

Your obedient Servant,

NICHOLAS J. BROWN,

Minister of Lands and Works.

Messrs. WM. HOWARD SMITH & SONS, Limited,
Market-street, Melbourne.