

SHANNON NAVIGATION.

F I R S T R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

FOR IMPROVING THE

NAVIGATION OF THE SHANNON.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 11 February 1840.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LORDSHIPS,

WE, the undersigned, having been appointed by your Lordships Commissioners for carrying into effect the provisions of the Act 2 & 3 Vict. c. 61, for the improvement of the Navigation of the River Shannon, and being directed by the 18th section of the Act to make detailed accounts of our proceedings up to the 31st day of December in each year, to be laid before Parliament, we have now the honour to make our First Annual Report, containing a statement of our proceedings up to the close of the last year.

We assembled in Dublin on the 9th October 1839, and immediately proceeded with all the preliminary arrangements for the organization of the establishment that appeared to be necessary in the first instance, which establishment has been submitted for your Lordships' approval.

Arrangements were next made for holding the courts required by the 20th section of the Act, for completing the investigation connected with the amounts of compensation to be paid to the several parties with whose properties or rights it has been found necessary to interfere.

Between the 22d October and 6th November 1839, courts were held at Limerick, Banagher, and Athlone, and between the 17th and 21st December 1839, at Longford and Carrick-on-Shannon, in all of which we received the most important assistance and advice from Mr. Serjeant Greene, our assessor. His legal knowledge and abilities, and the respect with which his decisions were received in all those districts, added much to the facility and despatch which marked our proceedings, as well as to the satisfaction of all parties interested. We were further assisted by two able notaries in the calculations for regulating the proportions to be paid to the different persons concerned; and we have the satisfaction of believing, not only that justice has been done to all persons interested, but that there is a general impression throughout the country that such has been the case.

Having received from your Lordships an amount in Exchequer Bills adequate to pay the compensation awarded, we have lost no time in making the arrangements necessary for paying the purchase-money in each case, and for taking immediate possession of the premises. Early in the month of February we expect that



that all payments will have been made for the property which it is necessary for us to take for the execution of the works: these payments include the sums awarded to the Grand Canal Company and the Limerick Navigation Company respectively. In cases where mills or other tenements are not immediately required, and where further temporary possession is deemed of importance to the occupiers, we have made arrangements for letting them for the periods that might be convenient for both parties, reserving to ourselves the power of entry whenever we may find it necessary to do so for the prosecution of our operations.

The season for the eel fishing has just terminated, and therefore renders the present period most favourable for removing the weirs, and dispossessing the persons engaged in that fishery, who will now have ample time afforded them to resort to other modes of fishing, or to seek other employment.

We have been engaged for the last six weeks in obtaining plans and specifications for those works which require our early attention. Amongst them are the construction of steam dredging vessels and barges, and the important works at Killaloe and Athlone: to the latter, in particular, we shall devote our most anxious attention, on account of the magnitude of the operations, and that more time will be required for their completion than for any of the other works, and also on account of the very great inconvenience which the public experience from the inadequate accommodation afforded by the existing bridge over the Shannon; indeed, the present evil is so great, that we considered it advisable to add to the breadth of the old bridge, by applying a rough timber footway as a temporary expedient till the new bridge shall be erected.

Until the whole navigation should be transferred to us, either from the several bodies hitherto in possession of different portions, or by the acquisition of the required lands and premises, we could not commence executing any of the works; but having obtained immediate transfer of the Upper Shannon from the Commissioners of Public Works, and having applied for and obtained possession of the Jamestown mill from the tenants, Hugh and Gerard Walsh, Esqrs. on a guarantee that their interests should not be compromised by such early delivery of the premises, we at once caused the mill-dam at Jamestown to be lowered about four feet, and, in consequence, immediate relief from floods was given to a very considerable extent of callow land, which had previously been covered with water for upwards of six months in each year, a relief that has been very satisfactory to all the proprietors and occupants of the low lands adjoining the Shannon for many miles above Jamestown.

By the accompanying statement of our accounts, which has been prepared pursuant to the Act, to be presented to Parliament, it will be seen, that up to the 31st December last, the disbursements have been inconsiderable; but, as already stated, the greater part of the money required for purchase, or as compensation, will be paid in the months of January and February, which will considerably reduce the large balance which at present stands to the credit of the Commissioners in the Bank of Ireland.

Shannon Commission Office, }
 Custom-House, Dublin, }
 25 January 1840. }

J. F. BURGOYNE.
 HARRY D. JONES.
 RICHARD GRIFFITH.

ANNUAL ACCOUNT of the RECEIPTS and DISBURSEMENTS of the Commissioners appointed under the Act 2 & 3 Vict. c. 61, intituled, "An Act for the Improvement of the Navigation of the River Shannon," from the passing of said Act to the 31st December 1839.

Dr.

1839:		£.	s.	d.
1 Oct. -	- Advanced by the Treasury - - - - -	500	-	-
21 Nov. -	- Transferred by the Commissioners of Public Works, being a balance remaining in their hands for the purposes of the Upper Shannon Navigation.	400	-	-
31 Dec. -	- Advanced by the Bank of Ireland on account of Exchequer Bills, amounting to 75,000 l., lodged there to the credit of the Commissioners.	1,000	-	-
		£.	1,900	- -

Cr.

1839:		£.	s.	d.
OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT:				
31 Dec. -	- Commissioner - - - - -	£. 250	-	-
	- Secretary - - - - -	100	-	-
	- Accountant - - - - -	100	-	-
	- Clerks - - - - -	79	-	2
	- Office-keepers, messengers, &c. - - - - -	67	3	- $\frac{1}{2}$
	- Contingencies - - - - -	34	1	- $\frac{1}{2}$
Total Office Establishment - - -		630	4	3
WORKS:				
	- Engineers and draughtsmen - - - - -	£. 324	6	- $\frac{1}{2}$
	- Expenses of holding valuation courts - - - - -	228	16	2
	- Bills for labourers at Jamestown Mill - - - - -	6	2	4
	- Contingencies - - - - -	22	13	1
Total Works - - -		581	17	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
UPPER SHANNON NAVIGATION:				
	- Inspector - - - - -	18	11	-
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS - - -		1,230	12	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
BALANCE - - -		669	7	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
		£.	1,900	- -

Shannon Commission Office, Dublin, }
25 January 1840.

Henry J. Mason,
Accountant.

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