

# PETITION

OF

INHABITANTS OF OAMARU,

PRAYING THAT A PORTION OF THE LAND FUND OF DISTRICTS OF THE MIDDLE  
ISLAND MAY BE ADMINISTERED BY LOCAL BOARDS.

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PRESENTED 25<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 1865, AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED.

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WELLINGTON.

—  
1865.



# PETITION

OF

## INHABITANTS OF OAMARU.

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To the Honourable the House of Representatives of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, the Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Town and District of Oamaru, in the Province of Otago,—

HUMBLY SHEWETH,—

That your Petitioners have invested their capital and purchased land in this District, and have introduced live stock, agricultural machinery and implements to develop its resources, in the firm belief that the Provincial Government would devote a fair proportion of the revenue derived from the sale of the Waste Lands of the Crown to advance the prosperity of the District by the improvement of the Port (an open roadstead), and the formation of a jetty, roads, bridges, and other works absolutely necessary for that purpose.

That the Provincial Government have derived Land Revenue from the District to the amount of about £150,000, and have expended but a very small proportion of this in any works of permanent value to the District.

Up to the present, there has not been one foot of macadamized road made, and the roads which have been made have become nearly impassable for heavy traffic.

That large sums have been meanwhile expended in expensive roads to draw the traffic of the Upper Gold Fields to Dunedin, although they could have been much more economically supplied from Invercargill or Oamaru.

That a sum has been twice voted in the Provincial Council to commence the jetty, plans for which have been prepared by the Marine Engineer of the Province, and the total cost estimated at £7,000. No effort has been made on the part of the Government to carry into effect the vote of the Council; yet tenders have been issued for expensive buildings for the Provincial Council in Dunedin, and other expensive works have been carried out.

That the want of a jetty entails great loss upon your Petitioners by their being obliged to land perishable goods in surf-boats, while wool is frequently damaged in course of shipment, and it is almost impossible to ship grain in quantity without serious damage and expense.

That, in the judgment of experienced agriculturists, this District is pre-eminently adapted for the growth of cereals, as has been fully confirmed by the harvest of the last two years; and as population cannot be expected to arrive to consume the rapidly increasing produce, a market must be looked for elsewhere, for which the proposed jetty is absolutely indispensable.

That the statistics appended to this Petition show that the claims of your Petitioners are strongly founded. Yet although they have been put forward by the Representatives in the Provincial Council, and recognized by that body, and deputations have on two occasions waited on the Superintendent, they have received nothing but vague promises and evasions.

That your Petitioners have reluctantly come to the deliberate conclusion that, if their interests are to be saved from ruin, and this valuable and important District to become prosperous, it must be by a total change of the Provincial system of government, which centralizes expenditure on the Capital and the Gold Fields, to the impoverishment of the Agricultural Districts, and which, by extravagant and expensive establishments, is rapidly bringing the Colony to ruin.

Your Petitioners therefore pray, that your Honourable House will take the whole matter in consideration, and legislate for the removal of the present Provincial Government and the establishment of one system for the whole Middle Island, including Local Boards for the administration of the details of Government, with power over a certain portion of the Land Fund; and that pending the completion of these necessary alterations, the Provincial Government should be restrained from squandering the Land Fund on useless or extravagant works.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c., &c.

[Here follow 582 signatures.]

