



THE ALTERATION IN THE BOUNDARY OF THE PARISH

The following petition was presented in both the House of Lords and the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The humble petition of the undersigned owners and occupiers of the property situated in the parish of Stratton St. Margaret, County of Wilts, humbly sheweth:- Whereas, your humble petitioners, being possessed of considerable property as owners and occupiers within the parish of Stratton aforesaid, containing a population of more than three thousand human souls, with a parochial rateable property of the above seventeen thousand pounds, beg leave most humbly to approach your honourable House regarding the unconstitutional and most unaccountable manner in which the interests and opinions of your petitioners and other resident householders within the several sanitary drainage districts of this parish have constantly been treated by succeeding Local Parochial Poor Law Boards of Guardian's and their clerks during the last few years past, and more especially through the action of certain centralizing Poor Law Acts of Parliament, whereby our old venerated local parochial Court Leets, Court Baron, and Jury Courts, formerly meted out justice to all ratepayers alike, now its powers have been superseded completely, and rendered of no positive use or benefit to us whatever.

As your petitioners with other ratepayers have continually, year after year, applied personally to their Guardians assembled, both magisterial and elected, as well as the Sanitary Committee sitting within the Highworth and Swindon Union Poor Law Board room, Stratton St. Margaret, and begged their particulars aid and attention to the most reckless and barbaress state and condition in which our principal sanitary drainage watercourses were continually failing throughout the whole of this parish, and more particularly in certain watercourse drainage districts situate within the tything of Lower Stratton, as well as Gorse Hill, Upper Stratton, where the streets of dwelling-houses containing above a thousand inhabitants, have been huddled up together within the last few years in defiance of certain representations of certain parishioners, who recommended the adoption of various clauses of the Public Health Act, as a means of securing some more effective parochial control over builders and other persons who, in defiance of all rules and sanitary laws have been allowed to go on erecting whole streets of houses at Gorse Hill and other districts of this parish, without either the proper or efficient sanitary drainage or pure drinkable water to the same, until the last Highworth and Swindon Local Parochial Board of Guardians mis-management of our local parochial board business here in Stratton have apparently the ruinous effects of their procrastination and putting the requisite and necessary drainage at Gorse Hill and other districts. And being fearful lest any infectious fever, cholera or such like, should suddenly spring up and involve them, the Highworth and Swindon Board of Guardians and officials there, into just indignation of the inhabitants who have so many times implored them (the Guardians) to obviate and prevent by some necessary wise rules and orders being made and issued, both as regards the necessary requisite local parochial sanitary drainage of the various districts, as well as in the erection of hundreds of dwelling houses and other buildings, which have been built up together year after year in the most reckless manner possible. But as Guardians of the Union after fostering all the evils it is possible to inflict upon any community of living people without wise laws or tangible regulations to protect themselves from harm's way, have now been seriously informed by an edictive and positive order from the Central Local Government Poor Law Board officials in London, that from and after the twenty-ninth of September next that all that rich district of our parish called Gorse

Hill, Upper Stratton tything, with a population of about a thousand inhabitants, and a rateable property from four to five thousand pounds, shall from the date hereof be turned over to the Urban Sanitary District Board officials of New Swindon, under the impudent and lying excuses that it is requisite so to do for sanitary purposes, when, contrary to the wishes and desires both of the inhabitant ratepayers of Stratton St. Margaret, Gorse Hill, and even New Swindon Board representatives themselves, that a sort of secret train of communication has been continuously carried on and kept going, aided and assisted at various times by magisterial ex-officio Guardians and Government officials resident in the country, and in London, to enforce a certain deeply concocted scheme of abstracting and taking away, not by any positive Law but by some cunningly devised edictive order from the executive Local Poor Law Board in London. And now aforesaid existing plague and fever district called Gorse Hill, which to all intents and purposes has been cherished and purposely upheld through the hitherto obstinate prejudiced opinions and negligence of various bygone boards of Guardians and their officials, who for the last five years have been seen to most seriously neglect and oppose the carrying out the various requisite and necessary public duties which they professed to hold on the part of the public generally around them. Your petitions therefore seeing no possibility whatsoever of ever obtaining anything like satisfaction and safety of property and life under existing laws and rules, most humbly beg your honourable House to give most serious attention to the laws generally relating to the poor, the highways, and the sanitary watercourse drainage of the rural districts, where now the greatest babel of absurdities regarding rural local parochial rule it is seen to prevail everywhere around us and your petitioners will ever pray.

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