
NEW YORK SLATE COMPANY.

PETITION

OF THE

NEW YORK SLATE COMPANY,

AND OF

INHABITANTS OF RHINEBECK AND CLINTON, IN DUTCHESS COUNTY,

PRAYING

That a specific, instead of the present ad valorem duty,

MAY BE IMPOSED UPON

IMPORTED SLATE.

MARCH 31, 1828.

Referred to the Committee of the Whole House to which is committed the *Bill in alteration of the several acts imposing duties on imports.*

WASHINGTON :

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON.

1828.

PETITION.

To the Honorable the House of Representatives of the United States:

The petition of the New York Slate Company,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH :

That your petitioners formed an association in the year one thousand eight hundred and two, and were incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York in the year 1810, with a capital of two hundred thousand dollars, for the purpose of opening and working slate quarries in said State, on the borders of the Hudson river.

That your petitioners raised a capital and applied the same in purchasing, opening, and working, said quarries, and in making the necessary arrangements for transporting the slate to market.

That your petitioners have continued to work the said quarries since the time of their association, and have furnished large supplies of slate, of the best quality, for covering the roofs of houses, which have been used in most of the principal cities of the United States; that the said quarries are abundant, and capable of furnishing increased quantities of this valuable and important material for building.

That your petitioners, after the most frugal and industrious prosecution of the business for twenty-five years, greatly to the advantage of the public and saving to the country, have not been able to make but two dividends of profits in the whole time, and none for the last fifteen years, owing to the importation of foreign slate, and the supply of the market at low prices, by reason of the low rate of duty charged thereon.

That your petitioners are discouraged in their business, and must abandon this branch of productive labor, so beneficial to the country, and, by retiring from competition, leave the market to be supplied by foreign importation, and at increased prices, unless they can receive from your honorable body the same protection and support which has so wisely and beneficially been extended to other manufacturing and productive labor of the United States.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray, that such specific, in lieu of the present ad valorem duty, may be laid on all slates imported into the United States, as in the wisdom of Congress may be found just and proper.

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

ANTHONY STEENBACH,

President.

JNO. McCOMB,
Secretary.

The memorial of inhabitants of the towns of Rhinebeck and Clinton,
in Dutchess county, State of New York,

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS :

That the New York Slate Company owns a large tract of land in the last mentioned town, on which were extensive quarries of slate, which have been worked for near *twenty-five* years past, and on which they have expended large sums of money in procuring a domestic material, and giving employment to many poor men and their families, besides affording an article so essential in building, at a price far below what the imported would be, were none of our own obtained, and which the increasing opening of the country will further afford; but that, owing to the present mode of collecting the duty on imported slate, they have been compelled to suspend their operations, and discharge their men, until some protection is afforded by the General Government; they therefore respectfully solicit your honorable body to consider this matter, and, in place of the present ad valorem duty, to enact a specific one, in order that all imported slate may pay a duty on the quantity landed in the United States, and not on the amount of the foreign invoice cost, as at present estimated.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

RHINEBECK, 30th December, 1827.

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NEW YORK, March 16, 1828.

SIR: Indisposition has prevented me from handing you the enclosed papers relative to the importation of foreign slate. The statement from the Customhouse books will show the duty collected on slate imported here for 1826, and amounts to a small sum *on the quantity*. The importations for 1827, have been still larger, but we have not obtained a statement from the Customhouse, thinking sufficient is shown of the present unfair impost; and you will please observe it is the small and middle sizes, say 12, 14, and 16 inches, which mostly interferes with us, being freighted by the ton, and duty collected on the cost instead of the quantity. The larger sizes cost too high in Wales, and the expenses of freight is not in proportion to the others, so that they cannot be delivered here as low; and if a manufacturer has a surplus stock of small slate on hand, he obtains an advance on them from a London or Liverpool agent, and sends them off to this country for sale. Besides, the present mode of building and slating by contract has caused the small and middle sizes to be more generally used, owing to their thinness in not requiring so many rafters, and more despatch in handling and laying on the roofs, but many recent fires have shown their insecurity.

Enclosed is also a petition from the inhabitants of Dutchess county, in our behalf. They are very desirous of having the quarries again worked, as it employed many people, and caused considerable circulation of money among them.

Any further information or service that I can render, in showing the present improper mode of collecting the duties on imported slate, will be given whenever required.

I am, respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. C. NEWTON, *Treasurer.*

LYNDE CATLIN, Esq.

*STATEMENT of duty paid on Welsh slate imported at New York,
in the year 1826, as taken from the Customhouse entries.*

	Cost Sterling.		Duty Paid.	
203,360 countesses, £1,116 12 8 or \$5,454			\$1,363 50, 20 in. by 10	
952,000 small ladies, 1,358 8 6			6,635 1,658 75, 14	7
864,220 ladies, 2,087 3 8			10,194 2,548 59, 16	8
609,120 doubles, 796 15 11			3,892 973 00, 12	6
20,360 dutchesses, 161 0 2			786 196 50, 24	12
<hr/> 2,640,060				
50 tons of imper'l's, 140 10		686	171 50, 30	16
<hr/> £5,660 10 11		<hr/> \$27,647	<hr/> \$6,911 84	

