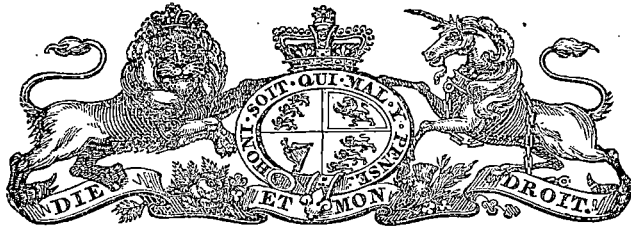


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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

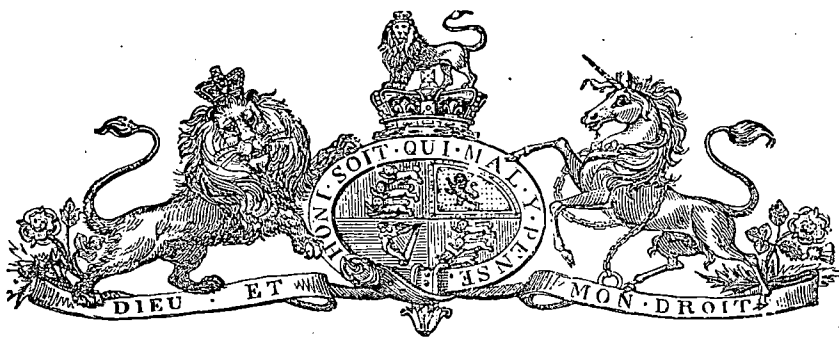
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HOSPITAL FOR INSANE, NEW NORFOLK:

INTERIM REPORT OF OFFICIAL VISITORS.

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



## HOSPITAL FOR INSANE, NEW NORFOLK.

### INTERIM REPORT.

*Hobart, 28th June, 1886.*

SIR,

WE, the Official Visitors appointed under "The Insane Persons Hospital Act Amendment Act, 1885," 49 Victoria, No. 35, to the Hospitals for Insane in Tasmania, have the honor to lay before you this our first Interim Report on the present condition of the Hospital for Insane, New Norfolk, embodying such recommendations, and accompanied by such plans for the general improvement and re-casting of that Hospital as will, if carried into effect, render it in every essential respect suitable as a modern institution for the reception, classification, and medical treatment of the insane, together with every convenience and appliance for the care and comfort of all who may have the misfortune to be brought within its walls as patients; and we have no hesitation in expressing our confident belief—a belief based on personal observation and investigation—that, provided the recommendations herein submitted are fully acted upon, this Hospital will be as perfect, and as well adapted for the care and treatment of the insane, as any kindred institution in the Australian Colonies.

As regards the site of the Hospital and general salubrity of the locality, improvement would be impossible within the limits of Tasmania, except at distances too remote to be available, whilst the climate, soil, drainage, water supply, general surroundings, scenery, &c. are all that could be desired, or that could contribute to the improvement or restoration of the mental or physical health of the insane.

The defects of the Institution, though grave and numerous, are, nevertheless, remediable; and it is in the hope and with the earnest desire that provision may be made for the immediate rearrangement and renovation of this establishment, that we hasten to lay before you the recommendations already referred to.

Referring to the Report of Drs. Manning, Dick, & Paterson, dated 11th January, 1884, we find the united opinion of these gentlemen expressed in the following terms; namely,—

"That in commencing an enquiry into the general management and working of the Institution, we were confronted by the unsuitable character of the buildings. These buildings do not allow of the proper classification of the inmates, and owing to the exposed position of the airing courts, which are overlooked from the main road, it is often necessary to relegate all the more noisy and demonstrative patients to the back division, the airing court of which is hemmed in by walls, the buildings of a most gloomy character, and the whole surroundings antagonistic to mental restoration.

"The Institution is virtually without administrative buildings, such of them as do exist being quite inadequate for the purpose for which they are used. The store-rooms, kitchen, and other buildings coming under this head are not only too small, but are inconveniently placed and wanting in necessary fittings; whilst the laundry and drying rooms are without any of the conveniences to be found in similar institutions in England and in the other Australian Colonies.

"A large part of the accommodation for patients, including the old cells, is dark, comfortless, and quite unfit for the curative treatment of insane persons. Some of the bath-rooms and lavatories are so

defective and ill-found that it is difficult to fully secure the personal cleanliness of the patients; and the absence of proper ward stores and pantries leads to untidiness, and renders the proper management of the Institution difficult, if not impossible. In many parts the buildings are in a bad condition of repair, and this, as well as the want of fittings and of appliances for serving meals, &c., induces us to think that an unwise parsimony has for some time been exercised in the control of the Institution.

“The quarters for the better class of patients are on the whole in a satisfactory condition; but even in these there is a sparseness of furniture and fittings, and little or no attempt to make the rooms cheerful by wall papers, painting, pictures, or other decoration.

“The present buildings are ill-arranged, badly placed on the site, whether as regards the amount of land now constituting the estate, or such additional amount as is recommended for purchase in the Report of the Royal Commission.

“A very large part of them are quite unfit for further occupation, and the remainder need extensive alterations.”

On entering on our duties as Official Visitors we were similarly confronted by the state of things above described, especially with regard to the condition and unsuitableness of many of the buildings; for, although some improvements of importance had been effected prior to our appointment to the Hospital, the buildings and arrangements generally remained unaltered, and upon this fact we base our Report, supported by such recommendations for the remodelling and perfecting of the Institution as will (if carried out) fully accomplish the great object in view. We therefore beg to submit the following as the result of our investigations, it being understood that the whole of the buildings condemned by the Experts as unfit for further use shall be removed.

That the only additional ground absolutely required to carry out the scheme we are about to propose is Grey-street. This street is little used, and of no value to the township, and is necessary to augment the far too limited space allotted to the male paying patients, and also to afford space for the airing-courts of the new buildings marked No. 1 on the plan. Grey-street is one chain wide, and its addition to the Hospital grounds would give airing-courts to No. 1. building two hundred feet in length. (See Plan.)

That No. 1 block, when completed, will accommodate from sixty to seventy patients, with ample cubic space, together with the means of classification, containing as designed twenty separate rooms, besides spacious dormitories and day-rooms, also separate airing-courts, &c., while the site chosen is the best that could be desired, having a northern aspect with a cheerful prospect and beautiful foreground.

That, as represented on Plan, there should be a separate and distinct enclosure sufficiently large to accommodate all workshops, lumber stores, wood-sheds, engine-houses, &c. The space represented is 154 ft. by 80 ft., and is ample for all the purposes required.

That, adjoining this enclosure, and separated from it only by a brick wall, and close to the steam-engine house, is a place set apart for a steam laundry, with all necessary appliances, drying-house and drying-yard, &c., &c., (see Plan.) This laundry is so situated that motive power and superheated steam could be readily available for all necessary purposes, while no communication between the male and female patients employed would be practicable.

That, as represented, it is proposed to supply a want long and seriously felt, namely, a mess and day-room for the male attendants of the hospital. The site chosen is distinct from all other buildings and as nearly central as possible, so that on the slightest alarm arising the attendants would at once be available. Too much could scarcely be said in favour of such a building—it is a necessity.

That a new kitchen should be erected as placed on plan,—central, commodious, and convenient,—and to include bakery, scullery, and all other necessary accommodation, together with a small plant of hot-water apparatus for the supply of the bathing house adjoining, and that the present kitchen be converted into a provision store, adjacent and convenient to the kitchen.

That a suitable building for administrative offices, &c. be erected near the front entrance as shown on plan, and that the upper floor of this building be the Assistant Medical Officer's quarters, it being considered of importance that this officer should reside within the precincts of the hospital. The want of administrative buildings and medical officers' quarters is one that should, or rather must be, remedied in the re-arrangement of the institution.

That the quadrangular block of buildings which forms the central and most conspicuous feature of the establishment on entering the gate is defective in all that appertains to sanatory considerations, and unworthy in its present condition to be retained as part of a modern hospital. The walls are too low, and there is neither cubic space, light, nor ventilation sufficient to entitle them to any claim as dormitories suited to the objects of such a hospital. Moreover, in addition to the unfitness of this block of buildings from sanatory defects, it is in all other respects faulty and objectionable, being not only destitute of the conditions and qualities referred to, but at the same time a positive eyesore, which would contrast most unfavourably with other improvements if left in its present condition. It is proposed, therefore, to unroof these buildings piecemeal, to raise the walls three feet, also the verandahs, thus giving more cubic space, with improved light and ventilation; the walls also to be plastered or cemented inside and stuccoed outside, and finished with some degree of taste and ornamentation; also the present offices and work-rooms included in this block to be abolished, and also the boiler-house and bath-room, thus converting the whole block into a number of convenient sized associated dormitories, capable of accommodating in all about fifty patients, with ample room to spare for a receiving-ward; and, as shown on plan, it is proposed to erect a wall from four to five feet in height across the front of the square, with ornamental railing on top (see designs),—the willow trees and old flagstaff to be removed,—the present cart road round the square to be abolished,—and the whole space to be levelled to the height of the front wall, and tastefully laid out and formed into an airing-court for this division. At present this ground is neither useful nor ornamental, whereas an airing-court is a positive necessity.

By the carrying out of these suggestions, not only would a great improvement be effected as regards the welfare of the patients, but, at the same time, that which is at present a blot and an eyesore would be transformed into a modern and elegant frontispiece, in keeping with the otherwise improved condition of the entire institution (see plans and designs.)

That to complete the above proposals with regard to the quadrangular block, it is contemplated to give the patients of this division free access by an open passage to what was formerly known as the back yard, also to erect a verandah along the whole length of the back of the square; also to erect a commodious day and mess-room capable of accommodating and dining fifty patients; also to convert the old back yard into a spacious airing-court with central garden, &c., as shown on plan.

It is also advised to leave the old separate apartments and corridor belonging to them as at present, opening on to this airing-court, also to enclose and plant a portion of this court for the accommodation of closets, urinals, &c., thus leaving the fifty patients occupying the quadrangular court free recreation space in front as well as in rear of these buildings, together with all the advantages of a spacious day and mess-room, with ample bathing accommodation, &c. (See Plan.)

That the separate apartments (sixteen in number) forming one side of the back airing-court (to the construction and condition of which no fault attaches) be retained as a means of separation and classification, and that the corridor, which it was proposed to widen, be allowed to remain as it is, its present width being sufficient (13 feet), and that a day-room and small associated dormitory be added, with an attendant's room as shown on plan. There would then be but 14 separate rooms left, but the associated dormitory, which would accommodate, say six patients, would more than compensate for the loss of the two small rooms.

That the store recently erected, and known as the "New Store" (which is in reality within the female division), being most inconveniently situated, and far from the kitchen, be converted into work-rooms for female patients.

The want of such work-rooms has already been pointed out, and it is absolutely necessary that they should be supplied, as much of the needlework has now to be done in the dormitories; and as a general store in a central position will be required, it is proposed to erect such a store as shown and marked on plan, including a dispensary, &c.

That morgue and *post mortem* rooms being a necessity, it is proposed, as shown on plan, to convert the buildings formerly known as the "Drying House" to these purposes. The position of this building is central to both divisions, and, with an outlet into Humphrey-street, would be well adapted for the objects in view at very little expense for alterations.

That the means of accommodation and classification in the refractory portions of the female division being most imperfect, and altogether inadequate, and this portion of the hospital being at the present moment perhaps the worst feature in the institution, it is proposed to erect a new building capable of accommodating 44 patients, with full means of classification and separation, as shown on plan; and, seeing that day-rooms, as well as dormitories, must be provided, and that small separate apartments are absolutely needed, also rooms for attendants, &c., &c., it is proposed that this building should be similar in design in every respect to the new building in the male division, only somewhat smaller in dimensions, say 20 feet shorter. Such a building would accommodate easily from 46 to 48 patients, with classification both in and out of doors. But while strongly recommending this addition, it is not intended to do away with the present building occupied by refractory female patients. On the contrary, it is proposed to improve and retain the present separate apartments, and to utilise the other portions of these buildings for the more feeble and helpless of the patients, who are at present exposed to the very objectionable society of the worst and most incorrigible class of patients.

That a distinct and separate home for idiots be provided and located as shown on plan. Several designs for this home have already been furnished, out of which one has been selected capable of affording the necessary accommodation, together with all the advantages which sanitary science can suggest.

It was originally intended to place the building on the farm belonging to the Institution; but the distance being inconveniently great, and the site unsuitable, and above the water level of the Asylum, the idea was abandoned, and it is now recommended to place it as shown on plan, the spot chosen being easy of access, and under immediate supervision; besides, separate cooking, kitchen, and dining-rooms will be unnecessary, thus effecting a considerable saving.

That the Matron's quarters, being situated in a most secluded and cheerless position, and within the discordant and never-ceasing din of the unfortunate patients, it is most desirable that a more suitable situation should be selected, and, with this view, the one marked on the plan has been chosen. It is removed from the harrassing influences to which the other is exposed, while it commands a full view of the grounds for observation, and we feel sure that this suggestion will meet with the sympathy and approval of the Government.

That the Matron's present quarters be transferred to the nursing staff, as a home where they may enjoy, with some degree of privacy, the comforts which a home alone can afford. Such an arrangement would prove a merciful boon to these nurses, as affording them temporary relief from the most irksome and trying of all duties, namely, a constant association with, and attendance upon, a mass of insane persons.

That the main, and all other buildings constituting the female division, be put in a state of thorough repair, as already recommended by the Official Visitors. These build-

ings are defective in many respects, being badly designed and injudiciously placed on the ground, their proximity to the high back boundary wall precluding the possibility of the introduction of modern innovations; but, as they are far too valuable to warrant the recommendation of their removal, it only remains that they shall be made the most and the best of by being kept in thorough repair and order.

That the washing, laundry, and drying arrangements at present in use are of the most inferior and imperfect kind, and that a steam laundry, with all its adjuncts and appliances, be provided and placed as shown on plan.

That with reference to the paying patients' quarters, male and female, there is little or no improvement to be desired; they are as perfect as could be wished, and only require to be kept in thorough order as regards furniture, fittings, colouring of walls, &c. &c.

That the grounds in all directions want attention and improvement, which alone would absorb a very great share of the available labour of the male patients.

Under the foregoing heads we have touched upon and pointed out the numerous defects of this Asylum as at present constituted, and have offered such information as, in our judgment, we deem necessary to a full understanding of the magnitude of the work to be undertaken in converting the present establishment into a creditable and complete modern institution. The expense, of course, will be great, but the attainment of the object in view is of greater importance, and, in fact, paramount to mere money considerations. It would have been satisfactory to us if we had found it possible to recommend a less expensive and less comprehensive scheme, but we feel that the time has arrived when this institution must either be entirely re-constructed and equipped in accordance with modern views, or for ever abandoned; and, bearing this constantly in mind, we have acted and advised up to the required standard, irrespective of cost, two things being clear, namely, that an Asylum for the Insane must be a permanent institution of the Colony wherever it may be placed, and that such an institution must of necessity be constructed and maintained in accordance with modern views and the dictates of modern philosophy. It therefore follows that, in the present instance, anything short of the standard demanded could not be acceptable either to the Government or to the Country; and it appears to us a certainty that whatever the cost may be of placing this establishment on a modern footing, it would cost at least three times as much to erect and equip a new establishment of the same magnitude in any other locality, especially where land has to be bought, roads constructed, water obtained at great cost, with all other necessary extraneous works.

This Asylum, when completed as proposed, will afford accommodation (irrespective of paying patients and idiots) for 140 to 150 male patients, and at least the same number of females; in all, including paying patients and idiots, from 340 to 350, with ample cubic space, airing-courts, recreation grounds, &c., and every facility for classification.

It may with reason be argued that these advantages, great as they undoubtedly are, are nevertheless insufficient, inasmuch as they do not appear to provide for the out-door employment of the insane, thus ignoring a curative agency supposed to be paramount to all others. To meet this want we would strongly recommend, in addition to the farm land connected with the institution, the purchase of a few acres of garden land for the cultivation of vegetables for the use of the Asylum, and the benefits of out-door employment for the patients. At present ten to twelve of the strongest and most useful men are employed daily all the year round in cutting up firewood. The introduction of steam power for this and other purposes would set the bulk of this labour free and available for other purposes, and we are of opinion that no better curative recreation for male patients could be procured than such as the cultivation of garden and farm produce would afford; while the introduction of steam laundry appliances into the female division would liberate a number of hands now employed in this direction.

These and many other collateral considerations, however, are at present of secondary importance, as they cannot be carried out on any well regulated basis until a complete reorganisation of the institution has been accomplished.

In this Report we have abstained from entering into details as to the internal working and management of the Asylum. The duties imposed upon us by the Act of Parliament under which we were appointed have been faithfully carried out, and the results of our labours as Official Visitors are already in the hands of the Government.

It is satisfactory to add, however, and we have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the fact that, although the institution is, as regards buildings, &c., as defective as has been represented, the care, comfort, and general welfare of the patients are as thoroughly seen to and cared for in all essential respects as could reasonably be desired; and that cruelty, privation, or harsh treatment, in so far as we have been able to discover, are things unknown within the walls of the establishment.

With regard to the best mode of domiciliating the Insane, two questions have engaged special attention of late, one being the Cottage, or Village System as it is called, the other the Boarding-out System; and as the consideration of these questions is of vital importance in legislating for the disposal of the insane, we deem it advisable to offer some observations with reference to them.

The chief object aimed at in each of these systems is segregation of the Insane as opposed to aggregation in large establishments; and this question invites consideration from two distinct points of view—First, from an economical standpoint; and second, from considerations affecting the welfare of the patients irrespective of economic considerations.

With respect to the former, there can be no difficulty in demonstrating the fact that the supervision, care, and proper treatment of a given number of insane persons (say, four hundred) can be conducted at much less cost within the precincts of a single well-organised institution than in a number of separate buildings scattered over a large area of ground, each being in itself complete as regards the supervision, care, and general management of its inmates.

As a single institution, the Hospital for the Insane at New Norfolk, with its 280 patients, can be thoroughly managed and efficiently worked at a cost of £8000 per annum; whereas the same number of insane persons domiciled on the Cottage or Village System would in all probability cost for extra attendants, supervision, &c., at least one-third more, as the following calculations, which have been carefully made, will prove.

We will suppose that 300 insane persons have to be domiciled on the Cottage principle, and that each cottage is to accommodate fifteen (15) patients, twenty (20) separate and distinct buildings would be required, of about the following dimensions:—

One day-room .....	18 × 24 ft.
One dining-room .....	18 × 24 ft.
One dormitory .....	18 × 30 ft.
Three separate rooms .....	8 × 10 ft.
Two attendants' rooms.....	12 × 14 ft.
One bath-room and lavatory .....	10 × 12 ft.
One W.C. ....	6 × 9 ft.
One pantry in store .....	8 × 10 ft.
One small kitchen, say.....	8 × 10 ft.

Add cost of water being laid on to each, also the cost of, say, one acre of ground to each with sunk fence, &c., each building would cost £2500 at least, the twenty buildings amounting to £50,000, in plain brickwork.

The foregoing calculation is based on the cost of accommodation per head (say (£150) for 300 patients with attendants; in addition to which we have to provide:

quarters for officers of all grades, stores, general kitchen and bakery, laundry, workshops, attendants' day and mess-rooms, chapel, large room for entertainments, &c., roadmaking, drainage, sunk fencing, with numerous other costly arrangements, altogether amounting to an additional sum of £20,000 to £30,000—total cost in all little short of £100,000; and to work this system would entail an additional perpetual cost for extra attendants, rations, uniform, fuel and light, &c., of at least £3000 per annum.

Such being the case, it may be asked would the advantages to the patients be commensurate with so great an increase of expenditure? In the newspaper reports of the Royal Commission on Hospitals for the Insane in Victoria, lately published, it is stated that "the evidence in favour of the Cottage System was overwhelming,"—a statement which may be taken to mean that the separation and classification which this system affords, combined with out-door employment, are of paramount importance in the successful treatment of the insane; and it appears to us most reasonable that such should be the case; indeed we feel assured that no institution for the cure of the insane could commend itself to the psychologist where such means of treatment did not exist, and it has been to the attainment of these very conditions that our chief attention has been devoted while arranging the plans and compiling the recommendations now submitted for the approval of the Government, as the following recapitulation will show:—

- 1st. There is the paying patients' cottage (males), with means of separation and classification.
- 2nd. The proposed new building for male patients, to accommodate, say, sixty of two classes, with separation and classification complete.
- 3rd. The central quadrangular block to accommodate fifty (50) patients of the quiet and orderly classes, with separation and classification complete.
- 4th. The separate apartments for male patients, to accommodate twenty (20) of the most refractory and incorrigible class; separation complete.
- 5th. The cottage for paying female patients; separation, &c. complete.
- 6th. New building to accommodate two classes of refractory female patients; separation and classification complete.
- 7th. The present buildings in use for refractory female patients to be appropriated to the use of the quiet and feeble; separation and classification complete.
- 8th. Main buildings, female division, to accommodate all female patients in good physical health and believed to be susceptible of improvement.
- 9th. Separate home for idiots.

From the foregoing it will be seen that in the proposed arrangements for the remodelling of the Asylum every attention has been paid to the all-important questions of separation and classification, so much so, in fact, that it is doubtful whether the adoption of the cottage system in its entirety could materially enhance the sanatory condition of the patients, seeing that all or nearly all the advantages claimed by that system will be fully met by the reorganisation of the present Asylum as proposed.

The question, therefore, of the expenditure which the adoption of the cottage system would entail is one demanding very serious consideration.

With regard to the Boarding-out system, little need be said.

Such a system could never be introduced into the centres of population, while in the agricultural districts of the colony few families indeed, if any, could be found willing, even for a high rate of payment, to receive into their homes a number of insane persons, however harmless. Poverty alone (and that of a character which happily does not exist here) could induce a resort to such a mode of adding to the means of existence. Moreover, in the sparsely populated districts of the colony the necessary supervision of the boarded-out by guardians would be impossible; and in the absence of



such supervision the system would prove not only dangerous to society, but would tend to the introduction of petty private asylums, based on purely mercenary considerations. Nor could the boarding out from the New Norfolk Asylum of all who may be considered safe and useful greatly reduce the present expenditure: the staff would remain the same, while the amount paid by the Government for such boarding out would far exceed that required for their maintenance within the Asylum.

Against these considerations the question alone of the advantages to the insane of the boarding-out system has to be weighed.

It must be admitted that the continuous intercourse of the insane with the insane is not calculated to promote a return to a healthy mental condition; while the association of the insane with the sane must in many cases exert a powerful curative influence; but when patients become sufficiently rational and harmless to be restored to society, it would be infinitely better to place them under the care and responsibility of their relations, as provided by the 22nd Section of the "Insane Persons Act."

If further information with reference to the "Boarding-out system" is desired, see Report of Dr. Manning (Inspector-General of Insane, New South Wales) for 1885, pages 6 and 7.

The question of out-door employment for the insane is one easily dealt with. To a certain extent the means are already provided in connection with the Asylum, and recommendations to provide additional means are embodied in this Report; but ample means of out-door employment and recreation being so essential to the welfare of the insane, the fullest scope must be afforded in that direction.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

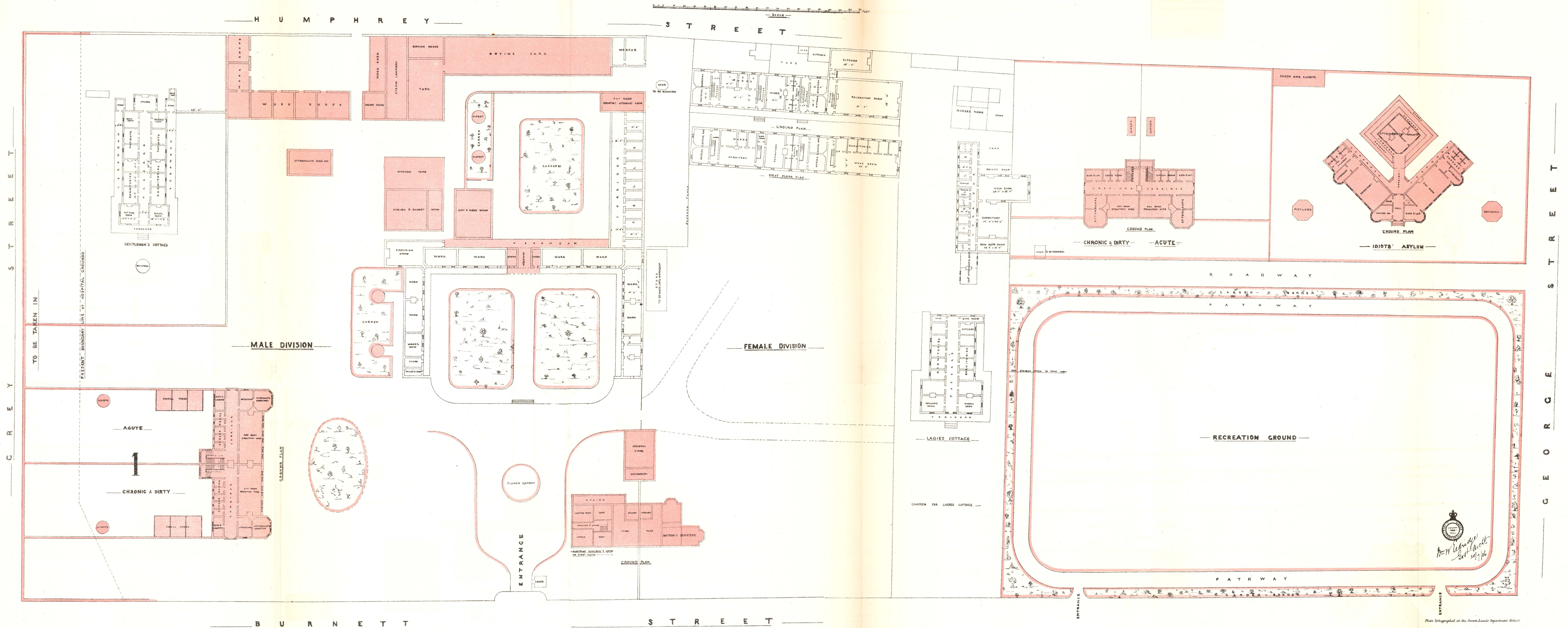
Your obedient Servants,

THOS. C. SMART,  
F. W. MITCHELL, } *Official Visitors.*  
GEO. INGE,

*The Honorable the Chief Secretary.*



# HOSPITAL FOR INSANE.—NEW NORFOLK.



Note—Red denotes proposed works  
Black " " old " "

Photo Lithographed at the Crown Lands Department, Hobart.