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1871.

T A S M A N I A.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

DEFENCES OF THE COLONY.

DESPATCHES AND OTHER PAPERS.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, November 8, 1871.



DEFENCES OF THE COLONY.

MEMORANDUM.

MR. WILSON has the honor to transmit herewith for His Excellency's information a copy of the Minutes and Resolution of the late Intercolonial Conference on the subject of the withdrawal from the Australian Colonies of the Imperial Garrisons of British Troops.

The Governor will observe that the Resolution embraces two leading points for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government: first, that by the withdrawal of the Troops "the local Governments will be thrown entirely on their own resources for providing means for their own defence against any invading Power;" second, the consequent necessity of a frank and practical recognition by the Imperial authorities of the obligation to "provide at all times and especially in time of war for the Naval Defence and protection of the Coast Line of Australia, and the extensive British commerce in its waters."

Regarding the first point, with special reference to the interests and capabilities of Tasmania, His Excellency's Ministers desire to state that the necessity imposed upon this Colony to provide entirely for its own defence by the organisation, equipment, and maintenance of a Local Force, whether Militia or Volunteers, must entail upon the country a very serious addition to its present annual expenditure.

The position of the Capital and seat of Government of Tasmania, in which is naturally aggregated the largest amount of valuable buildings and moveable wealth, can only be regarded as absolutely defenceless from attack by sea. Large sums have been voted by the Legislature for the construction of batteries, the purchase of ordnance, and the organisation of a Local Force of Artillery Volunteers. But such is the extent and accessibility of the magnificent estuary of the Derwent, that Hobart Town cannot be considered safe at any time from the attack of a predatory Cruiser or a flying Naval Force, armed and armoured with the appliances of modern warfare, which could easily lay the City under contribution, and inflict at the same time serious loss and damage on the Colony and some humiliation on the National Flag.

These considerations will serve to enforce the application to the circumstances of this Colony of the second topic which the Intercolonial Conference desired to impress upon Her Majesty's Government.

The general sense of the Conference assumed, as a matter of course, that the Naval Defence of these Colonies by Her Majesty's Ships in time of war would be recognised and admitted by Her Majesty's Government as a legitimate Imperial obligation. But it was thought desirable to draw attention to the fact of the vast amount of British capital invested in the shipping and commerce of Australian ports, injury to which from defect of Naval protection in time of war would prove, probably, even more detrimental to British than to Colonial interests, and would be likely to provoke the censure of the Imperial Legislature, as it would certainly inflict disgrace upon the Imperial Government.

The Intercolonial Conference was also very strongly of opinion that the system on which Ships of War on the Australian Station have been hitherto almost exclusively concentrated in Port Jackson operates unfairly upon the Colonies generally, and should be amended to the mutual advantage of Great Britain and the Colonies. A British Man-of-war is rarely indeed seen at anchor in the Derwent. Adelaide again has scarcely ever been visited by a Queen's Ship before or since the recent sojourn in Port Glenelg of Her Majesty's ship *Galatea*.

His Excellency's Advisers would suggest as matter for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, that for accessibility, extent, and safety of anchorage, central position, and facilities of communication by telegraph (which will shortly be extended to New Zealand) with the other Colonies, the port of Hobart Town will stand the test of comparison with any other harbour in British Australia, while the Government Buildings in this City—expressly adapted for the reception and safe custody of warlike stores and munitions—are superior in every way to anything of the same kind in any of the other Colonies.

Hobart Town would therefore seem to be admirably adapted for the Head Quarters Station of the Australian Command. Such was the opinion of the late Commodore Burnett, *C.B.*, which, it is within the knowledge of His Excellency's Advisers, that lamented Officer was prepared, had he lived to reach England, to urge upon the attention of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Such an arrangement would in some measure compensate Tasmania for the expense involved in the maintenance of a Local Land Force in lieu of an Imperial Garrison, while it would secure her from the risk of insult and loss by hostile aggression, to which her Capital is exposed in a greater degree than Sydney, Melbourne, or Adelaide.

The Governor's Advisers are also anxious that Her Majesty's Government should be made aware that the Intercolonial Conference, representing as it did the Governments of New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia, and Victoria, was unanimously of opinion that the extent and importance of the political and commercial interests of Australia, coupled with the amount and value of British capital employed in Australian trade, would justify the elevation of the Australian Station to the dignity of a Flag Officer's Command.

His Excellency's Advisers venture to hope that the Governor will feel at liberty, in submitting these views for the consideration of the Secretary of State, to support them by the weight of his official testimony and personal recommendation. They conceive that nothing is herein suggested or urged that might not be conceded by the Imperial Authorities without detriment to Imperial interests, and with the certainty of still further strengthening the loyal attachment of these Colonies to British Sovereignty and British Institutions, and confirming their confidence in the justice and statesmanship of Her Majesty's Government.

JAMES MILNE WILSON.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 2nd August, 1870.

His Excellency the Governor.

EXTRACTS from Minutes of Intercolonial Conference, 1870.

WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS.

THURSDAY, JUNE 23.

MR. BARROW introduced his Motion with reference to Imperial Troops as follows:—

"That the Despatches received from Her Majesty's Government on the subject of military protection in Australia embody terms and conditions which cannot be accepted with due regard to the general interests of the various Colonies, and lead to the conclusion that the Imperial Troops will be speedily withdrawn, thus throwing the Australias entirely upon their own resources. That, under these circumstances, it is desirable the Governments of the several provinces should prepare a Memorial to Her Majesty, praying her to cause steps to be taken, by treaty or otherwise, that will secure to these Colonies, as far as practicable, the position of neutral states in the event of war."

Discussion took place upon the proposition, further consideration of which was deferred.

TUESDAY, JUNE 28.

Deliberation was then resumed, on the Motion of Mr. Barrow, relative to the withdrawal of Imperial Troops; as also on the amendment proposed by Sir James M'Culloch, which was discussed and finally agreed upon, as follows:—

"That the Despatches received from Her Majesty's Government on the subject of military protection in Australia show that the Imperial Troops can only be permitted to remain in the Colonies upon terms and conditions which cannot be accepted, and lead to the conclusion that the Imperial Troops will be speedily withdrawn, thus throwing the Colonies entirely upon their own resources for their internal defence.

"That, in these circumstances, it is the opinion of this Conference that Her Majesty's Imperial Government should undertake to provide for the defence and protection of the coast-line of Australia and of British commerce in its various ports, and that this Conference do address a humble memorial to Her Majesty accordingly."

It was agreed that Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hart should prepare the memorial.

FRIDAY, JULY 1.

Resolution.

In lieu of the Memorial prepared relative to the withdrawal of the Imperial Troops, Sir James M'Culloch proposed:—

"That this Conference do agree to the following Memorandum, and that a copy thereof be laid by the Representatives of each Colony before their respective Governments, in order that the subject to which it relates may be brought under the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

"That it appears from Her Majesty's Secretary of State's Despatches, on the subject of military protection in Australia, the terms upon which Imperial Troops can be permitted to remain in the Colonies cannot be satisfactorily adjusted, as between Her Majesty's Government and the Colonial Governments, and that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to withdraw the Troops at a very early date, by which withdrawal the local Governments will be thrown entirely on their own resources for providing means for their own defence against any invading power.

"That in these circumstances it is desirable to press upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government the duty of providing at all times, and especially in time of war, for the naval defence and protection of the coast-line of Australia and the extensive British commerce in its waters, and to express the confidence with which the Colonial Governments believe this obligation will be recognised and admitted by the Imperial Government."

Carried.

No. 32.

Government House, Tasmania, 6th August, 1870.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward to your Lordship a Memorandum addressed to me by Mr. Wilson, Premier and Colonial Secretary of this Colony, together with a copy of the Minutes and Resolutions of the late Intercolonial Conference on the subject of the withdrawal of the British Troops from the Australian Colonies.

2. This Memorandum contains the views of my Advisers respecting (1) the general question of a recognition by Her Majesty's Government of its obligations to "provide at all times, especially in time of war, for the naval defence and protection of the coast line of Australia, and the extensive British commerce in its waters;" and (2) the special question of the defenceless position of Hobart Town from any attack by sea, and the advantages of position and facility of approach offered by this harbour for being made the Head Quarters of the Australian Squadron.

3. The views of my Advisers on the first of these two questions are so clearly expressed, that I think it is unnecessary for me to say more on the subject than that I have every reason to believe that these opinions were unanimously shared in by the Delegates at the recent Conference, and I am certain that they express the general feeling of the inhabitants of this Colony.

4. As regards the special case of Tasmania, I may remind your Lordship that the defenceless state of Hobart Town harbour, and the difficulty of protecting it from attack by sea by the construction of land batteries alone without the aid of a gun boat or armed vessel of some kind, has been frequently brought under the notice of Her Majesty's Government by more than one of my predecessors. The Colonial Government is prepared to recommend to Parliament such additional measures for securing the internal tranquillity of the Country as the withdrawal of the Troops may render necessary. But there is no doubt that, as this Memorandum points out, a single predatory cruiser or a flying naval force armed and armoured with the appliances of modern warfare might, in the event of war, have it in its power, in defiance of the existing batteries, to lay the town under contribution and inflict serious loss and damage on the Colony.

5. The superior advantages possessed by this harbour over any other on the Australian coast in point of central position, facility of access in all weathers, and extent of anchorage for vessels of the largest class have also from time to time been brought before the Imperial Government. I may remind your Lordship of the opinion on this point of Admiral Hornby and the Officers in command of the vessels composing the Flying Squadron, which I quoted in my Despatch of the 29th January last. The advantages of this position have been greatly increased during the past year by the construction of a submarine line of Telegraph between this Colony and Victoria. It has been thus brought into direct telegraphic communication with all the principal ports of the Australian Colonies, and will, no doubt, shortly be connected with New Zealand in a similar manner.

6. If, however, it should not be judged expedient by Her Majesty's Government to remove the Head Quarters of the Australian Squadron entirely from Sydney, I would invite your Lordship's special attention to that portion of the Memorandum which explains what the views of the Conference were respecting the impolicy of exclusively concentrating the Squadron in Port Jackson. If a single vessel only of the Squadron were either permanently or for some time of the year stationed in the Derwent, it would add most materially to the security of the harbour; and in the event of her services being required elsewhere on any sudden emergency she would, as I have already stated, be in a central position and could be communicated with promptly by telegraph. Such an arrangement would also be regarded by the Colony as a compensation to a considerable extent for the forthcoming immediate withdrawal of the Troops stationed here. The case of Tasmania in this respect is, as I have in previous Despatches pointed out to your Lordship, regarded by the Colony as resting on exceptional grounds. To these grounds I need not again revert, as they were doubtless fully considered by Her Majesty's Government before the final step of withdrawal of the Troops was resolved on. I may, however, add that, apart from any special claims advanced by the Colony for retention of Troops, a feeling of regret at their coming departure is very strongly expressed in general society, and the policy of Her Majesty's Government is at best but reluctantly acquiesced in.

7. After the number of years that Troops have been stationed in this Colony, and the friendly relations that have always existed between them and the Colonists, the expression of such a feeling is, I think, but natural on the part of the latter; and I am happy to say that it is also combined with the expression of a spirit of loyalty to the Crown and attachment to the Mother Country. The presence of Troops here has been, in fact, very generally regarded as a recognition by the Imperial Government of the Colony's identification with the interests and welfare of an united English Empire; and their departure is regretted quite as much for its presumed tendency to weaken these ties, as for the loss of any special pecuniary benefit the Colony itself derived from their presence.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

CHARLES DU CANE.

The Right Honorable the EARL of KIMBERLEY, *K.G.*

Government House, Tasmania, January 7, 1871.

MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

ALTHOUGH I feel it to be unnecessary to invite the attention of Ministers to a subject of the vital importance of which they are without doubt thoroughly convinced,—I mean the telegraphic intelligence received by the last mail respecting the present critical state of the relations between England, Russia, and America,—I wish, for my own satisfaction, to put on record the views respecting the defences of this Colony which I have repeatedly expressed both at Meetings of the Council and in conversation with the Colonial Secretary and other Members of the Ministry.

2. The Australian Colonies have received the assurance from the Home Government that, in the event of an outbreak of war occurring between England and any foreign power, prompt measures will be taken to give the earliest information of war being declared, as well as to provide for the maritime defences of the Colonies. It may therefore, I trust, be presumed that, in the event of England being involved in war either with Russia or America, or both countries simultaneously, the existing Australian Squadron would receive such an augmentation of strength as would enable it to cope successfully with any hostile naval force that would be likely to be sent into Australian waters.

3. For defence against a naval force of this kind this Colony could only look to protection by the ships of an Imperial Squadron. The erection of the large and costly works that would be necessary to give complete security by land defences alone, their armament, together with the permanent maintenance of an artillery force to man them, would be altogether beyond the resources of the Colony. It must, however, be remembered that, in the event of war occurring between England and any naval power, these Colonies would be liable, not merely to the attack of a powerful squadron, but to the visitation of solitary cruisers. The object of vessels of this class would be to elude the vigilance of our own squadron, enter all defenceless harbours, and lay the towns under heavy contribution under a threat of shelling them unless the sum demanded were forthcoming within a given time.

4. The experience of the late American war is sufficient to show the vast damage to property that vessels of this class have it in their power to inflict on a defenceless harbour and town, and how repeatedly they manage to elude the utmost vigilance of any blockading squadron.

5. It is acknowledged that at the present moment the harbours of Hobart Town and Launceston are both in a perfectly defenceless state, and entirely unable to offer resistance to a solitary armed cruiser; while, on the other hand, it has been shown that by a certain immediate outlay for the erection and arming of batteries, and an annual subsequent payment for the maintenance of an artillery force, it would be perfectly possible to secure them both against any such isolated attack.

6. The question at issue, then, is simply this—whether it would be better as a matter of policy and economy to leave these harbours in their present defenceless condition, or to incur the expenditure necessary for their security under the above specified contingency.

7. I can have no hesitation myself in declaring most strongly for the latter of these two alternatives. Independently of the humiliation which I am sure Englishmen all the world over would feel in having to acknowledge their inability to strike a blow in their own defence against any foe, however insignificant, I advocate the defence of these towns and harbours on the score of its economy as a pecuniary investment. It has, I believe, been estimated by competent authorities that effective batteries might be erected, and a sufficient armament and ammunition supplied to work them, at a cost of £42,500; and that a further yearly sum of £3000 would be required for the maintenance of a sufficient body of artillery. The sum of £42,500 includes an estimate of £5000 for the cost of defences at Launceston, though the intricate navigation of the river Tamar must always prove the surest defence of that port. The contribution that any single cruiser would be

likely to demand and obtain would hardly be less than this sum, and would most probably be considerably more; and it must be remembered that the payment of a single contribution of this kind can by no means be regarded as insuring future immunity from similar visitations; on the contrary, the knowledge that this harbour had been once successfully visited would be only too likely to induce similar cruisers to repeat the attempt, and expose the Colony to repeated humiliation and extortion. The experience of the terrible conflict that has been for the last four months raging on the soil of France teaches us how little reliance can be placed on the forbearance of an invading foe, upon what slight provocation whole towns can be destroyed, and what widespread ruin and misery can be caused by forced contributions, even if unaccompanied by personal violence or destruction of life and property.

8. I must also point out to my Advisers the additional inducement that, in its present defenceless state, would be offered to an enemy to visit the harbour of Hobart Town, in the retention here at the present time of a considerable quantity of munitions of war, including valuable rifle guns. Unless it is contemplated to use these in defending the harbour, they had better be thrown into the Derwent, or otherwise disposed of, rather than remain as a prize to the first hostile cruiser that may find its way into the port after war is declared.

9. It is also, I think, unnecessary for me to remind my Advisers that, should it be resolved to let these harbours remain in their present state, Tasmania will be the only one in the entire group of the Australian Colonies that has made no effort to strengthen its coast defences. While such continues to be the case, it would be in vain to anticipate the recognition of this Colony as a member of any Colonial Federation for mutual defence or other purposes. The capture, too, of any vessel of another Colony in Tasmanian waters, under such circumstances, might give rise to questions of liability, and other complications, which it is obviously the interest of this Colony to avoid if possible.

10. These are the principal grounds why I have from time to time endeavoured to impress upon Ministers the advisability of strengthening the defences of the harbours of Hobart Town and Launceston, so far as may be necessary to render these ports secure against the attacks of solitary cruisers. Even should the next mail bring the tidings, as we may devotedly hope, of a peaceful solution of the present difficulties, it is very evident that in the existing unsettled state of Europe England may at any moment be involved in war. Under any circumstances, therefore, it would to my mind be most unwise to postpone the immediate consideration of the question of the defences of this Colony.

11. As it is very probable that by the next English mail I may have to communicate with the Secretary of State for the Colonies on this subject, I shall be glad to be furnished with a Memorandum in reply to this, embodying the views of my Advisers on this most important question, and the steps, if any, which they are prepared to take in the direction I have recommended.

CHARLES DU CANE, *Governor.*

MEMORANDUM.

THE necessity for making provision for the safety of Hobart Town and Launceston from external attack, in view of the threatening aspect of British relations with Russia and the United States, which forms the subject of the Governor's Memorandum of the 7th instant, has not escaped the attention of His Excellency's Advisers.

Prior to the receipt of that Minute, the Colonial Secretary, in conjunction with the Minister of Lands and Works, and accompanied by Major Warren, Commanding Royal Engineer; and the Director of Public Works, made a personal inspection of the existing batteries, and of the site of a proposed additional battery at One Tree Point, a little below Sandy Bay, which was suggested so long ago as 1865 as an appropriate position for a defensive work in a Memo. by Lieutenant Lloyd, R. E., on the Defences of Hobart Town.

This Memo. has been recently reported on by Major Warren, R. E.; who concurs in the main with Lieutenant Lloyd's views on this subject, and recommends the construction of a battery at One Tree Point. A copy of the paper embodying the opinions of these Officers is appended to this Memorandum.

In accordance with these views His Excellency's Ministers have taken the necessary steps for the acquisition of the requisite site for public purposes, and requested the Commanding R. E. to prepare a plan of the new battery. The levels are now being taken, and the construction of this work will be immediately commenced and completed with all possible despatch.

This battery will be armed with two seven-ton rifled guns *en barbette*, which, occupying an elevation of some 80 or 100 feet above the sea level, would sweep the whole of the lower Derwent in view from that side, and command the anchorage as far up as Kangaroo Bluff and Montagu

Bay. These guns would see into Sandy Bay, and obviate the necessity for a work at St. George's Hill or Mona-street, assisted with the raking fire of the heavy rifled ordnance already in position at the Queen's Battery—which it is proposed to strengthen with the addition of a 70-pounder rifle gun now in store. The battery on One Tree Point would render it, in Major Warren's judgment, "difficult, if not impossible, for any vessel at all likely to visit these waters to withstand its fire." His Excellency's Ministers are confidently of opinion that, in the event of war, it is absolutely essential that Her Majesty's Government should detach a small armed vessel, either Gun-boat or Monitor, for service in Tasmanian waters. With such assistance, the three batteries with which Hobart Town will then be provided ought to prove an amply sufficient guarantee for the security of the Capital of the Colony from the attack of a single Man-of-war, Cruiser, or Privateer likely to engage in the attempt to lay it under contribution. But without the assistance of a Floating Battery the shore guns would be utterly insufficient for the purposes of general defence.

As regards the defence of Launceston, the sinuosities of the river by which alone it can be approached from the sea constitute, as His Excellency is aware, its surest prevention from hostile attack.

At the request of the Government, the Commanding R. E. has reported on the condition and efficiency of the West Tamar Battery; and in accordance with that Officer's suggestions, orders have been issued for strengthening the works by mounting the guns *en barbette*.

The Colony has already, at a very considerable expense, constructed and equipped the Queen's and West Tamar Batteries. These works were constructed on the most approved principles of modern military engineering, under the immediate superintendence of Lieutenant-Colonel Chesney, lately Commanding R. E. in Tasmania. Heavy rifled ordnance has been specially imported for the Queen's Battery; and it is submitted that when the contemplated new works are completed—considering also that Tasmania has for the last ten years maintained a Volunteer Force at an annual cost of nearly £3000—this Colony will have done as much in proportion to her resources and population as any of the Continental Colonies have done in the way of defensive preparations against foreign aggression.

As regards the existing Defence Force of the Colony, should the coming Mail bring news of a declaration of war, His Excellency's Government would at once re-organise the Artillery Corps on both sides of the Island, and advise an immediate Session of Parliament for the purpose of passing a Militia Bill, and making other provision for placing the Colony in a proper state of defence.

His Excellency's Advisers apprehend no difficulty in raising the requisite number of local troops in the event of war. The loyalty and spirit of the population now, as on a former occasion, may be safely relied upon to fill the ranks of a Colonial Defence Force. It must also be remembered that a considerable proportion of the adult male population has undergone, as Volunteers, a certain amount of training in military exercises and the use of the rifle.

There are also several Rifle Clubs in different parts of the Colony, the members of which are fairly proficient marksmen, while a large proportion of the enrolled Volunteers have attained a high degree of proficiency with the rifle, as is shown by the results of the annual firing for the Government prizes.

The Artillery Volunteers, again, have been long and carefully trained as gunners, and many of their number have distinguished themselves in the practical use of the rifled and smooth-bore guns now in position in the Queen's Battery.

In proportion to her population, Tasmania can, probably, show as large a number of men trained to the use of the rifle and of great guns as any other Australian Colony. There is every reason to believe that in the event of war there would be no lack of Artillery Volunteers fully qualified to work the guns in position in the three batteries, or of Sharpshooters practically familiar with the rifle, who would prove quite equal to the duty of protecting those works from surprise or attack in the rear.

A Militia Act offering exemption to Volunteers would place a large number of the best class of the male population at the immediate disposal of the Government.

The Volunteers, having been drilled by competent Musketry and Artillery Instructors, (two of whom, Sergeants of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, are now on pay in the service of the Colony) would, from their previous training and familiarity with a certain amount of discipline, constitute a valuable nucleus of a Defence Force that would soon imbibe their military ardour, and emulate their proficiency as sharpshooters and gunners.

These are the present views of His Excellency's Ministers on the important question of Colonial Defences.

Looking, however, at the grave position of affairs in Europe, and the uncertainty of Her Majesty's relations with the Government of the United States of America, His Excellency's Ministers have now under consideration measures for placing the Volunteer Force on a more satisfactory footing and for securing the continuance of the services of the existing Corps, irrespectively of the tenor of the news by the Mail which is due at Adelaide on the 16th instant.

The Governor's Advisers beg to thank His Excellency for the lively interest in the welfare and safety of the Colony exhibited in his Memorandum of the 7th instant, and for the exposition of His Excellency's views on the subject of Colonial Defences.

(Signed) JAMES MILNE WILSON.
Colonial Secretary's Office, 14th January, 1871.

His Excellency the Governor.

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL BATTERIES FOR THE DEFENCE OF HOBART TOWN.

THE accompanying sketches show the sites and designs proposed for two new batteries, to be constructed, one on Kangaroo Point, the other beyond Sandy Bay, in order to lessen, as far as may be done by land batteries, the dangers to which Hobart Town would be exposed from an enemy's ships. In favor of this proposition it is urged :—

1. That the depth and width of the Derwent below the town would allow the utmost latitude of position, so that even a wooden vessel with rifled guns could shell the town very effectively from distances at which the risk to herself would be very trifling. A comparison of the continuous with the dotted arcs (in red), *v.* Fig. 1, will show that any such area of comparative safety would be very much curtailed, and would be further withdrawn from the town by more than 2000 yards by the construction of the proposed batteries. (The arcs are struck from the various batteries, existing or proposed, as centres, and with radii of 2000 and 4000 yards.)

2. That the enemy's ill-aimed shots would not, as in the case of the existing batteries, take effect upon the town, but on the contrary the enemy's fire would be distracted and diverted from the town.

3. That the wide dispersion of the guns of the defence, and the convergent fire resulting from it, is very valuable, especially against shipping.

Sir W. Denison's remarks on this point may be quoted :—

"A simple battery, however well placed, can never be so effective against shipping as several small batteries containing the same number of guns as the single battery. A vessel can nearly always bring a greater number of guns into action than a battery, and if the vessel can be within 300 or 400 yards of it, the latter will generally be silenced.

"The case, however, is very different when the same number of guns can be placed so as to concentrate their fire upon the one vessel: those of her broadside can be brought to bear upon one battery; another is in a position to rake her fore and aft, and can only be opposed by one or utmost two guns from the bow or stern. The effect of this raking fire is most destructive. It dismounts the guns, ploughs up the decks, injures the masts and spars; in fact, a steady raking fire from 3 or 4 guns placed at a trifling elevation above the deck of a vessel would cripple her in a very short time."

The battery would be of hardly less value against the mode of attack mentioned by Sir Howard Douglas :—

"In the desultory operations of small active steamers employed to shell with their pivot guns open towns, roadsteads, &c., the attacking vessels should never anchor, but having given their end on fire, go off at speed to reload. To hit a steamer running with speed across a line of fire is no easy matter, and when in the end on position she presents but a small target to hit at a long range."

4. A vessel might attempt to run up the stream, above the town. This would be more hindered by a cross-fire from both sides of the river than by anything else.

5. Supposing that a gunboat were available to assist in the defence, it would manœuvre far more safely and effectively with the support of these two batteries, since they would cover its retreat if crippled, and would compel the enemy to keep the middle of the stream.

6. Under their fire a vessel would never venture to anchor in Sandy Bay, and the necessity for a Battery at St. George's Hill would therefore be avoided.

7. The ground at both points is very well suited for the site of a coast battery.

The objections are :—

1. That to man the battery would reduce the numbers, already too small, available for the town.
2. That there would be difficulty and delay in manning them in the hurry of an unexpected attack ; and
3. That by a landing in rear the batteries might be stormed and their guns turned against the town.

As regards the first objection, it must be remarked that it is not a question of numbers. The population of Hobart Town should be able to man as many guns as are necessary for its defence. But whatever the number may be, the only question is where they may best be placed—in the city or two miles off. If there were only twelve, it would not follow that they should all be together. The armaments of the existing batteries are now being reduced, so that there need be no increase in the total numbers.

Secondly. The delay owing to the distance of the batteries from the town would not amount to more than half an hour. A surprise is possible, of course : but in that case, the men being so scattered, the town batteries would fare little better. But with a good look out, and a telegraph from the Iron Pot, two hours' notice might fairly be hoped for.

As to the third, it would be far less trouble for an enemy to land guns and make their own batteries on these sites, if unoccupied, than to take the batteries it is proposed to place there. If they meddled with them at all, it would be from their annoyance, and to silence—not to make use of them.

If enclosed and well defended, they could not be taken without a loss both of time and men which the enemy would be sorry to encounter.

Lastly. It must be remembered that if there are some chances against them, there are some in their favor. These are what the enemy would chiefly look to ; and if he could be made to feel that he ran no very small risk of being unsuccessful and crippled off a stormy coast, and at so great a distance from any friendly harbor, he would probably give up the attempt altogether.

The designs, as shown, might of course be modified. That for Kangaroo Point would probably cost nearly £2000. That for One Tree Point near Sandy Bay, with a masonry tower as a keep, also about £2000, or with a cupola £6000. This last, though very desirable, might be dispensed with or postponed.

E. M. LLOYD, *Lt.R.E.*,
6th September, 1865.

REMARKS BY COMMANDING ROYAL ENGINEER.

I QUITE concur in the selection of One Tree Point and Kangaroo Bluff as sites for additional batteries to materially strengthen the defences of Hobart Town harbor. The work at Kangaroo Point should be an enclosed one, and capable of resisting an assault in rear, to which from its isolated position it might be exposed, with a view to its guns being turned on the town. Its construction should therefore not be undertaken unless there was a certainty of its being well manned in case of any emergency ; and this appears very doubtful in the present circumstances of the Colony and in the absence of regular troops.

I give more importance to the occupation of One Tree Point, where an inexpensive open battery at an elevation of about 80 or 100 feet above the sea might be easily constructed for the most part by convict and unskilled labor. It should be armed with two heavy guns *en barbette*, which might engage a vessel on her first appearance in sight and sweep the whole of the lower Derwent in view from that site, and up as far as Kangaroo Bluff and Montagu Bay, seeing also into Sandy Bay, and thus avoiding the necessity for a work at St. George's Hill or Mona street. Indeed, with the assistance of the raking fire of heavy rifled guns in the Queen's Battery, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for any vessel at all likely to visit these waters to withstand their fire.

A block house might be constructed on the hill in rear of the battery to afford protection to the detachment in case of an attack in rear, and it might be used as quarters for the men for a limited period at any time, and would permanently accommodate a caretaker.

FIG. 1

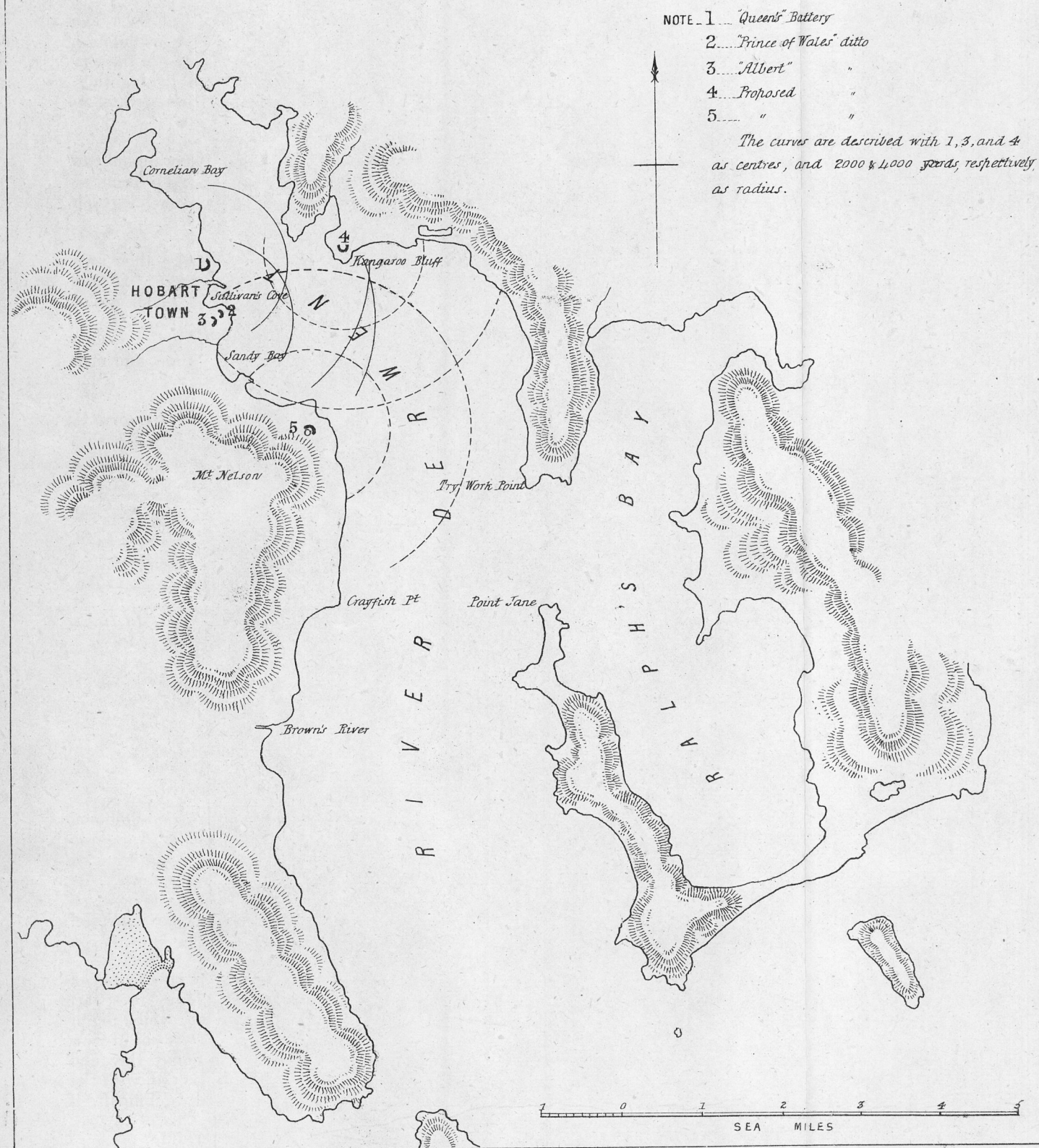


FIG. 2

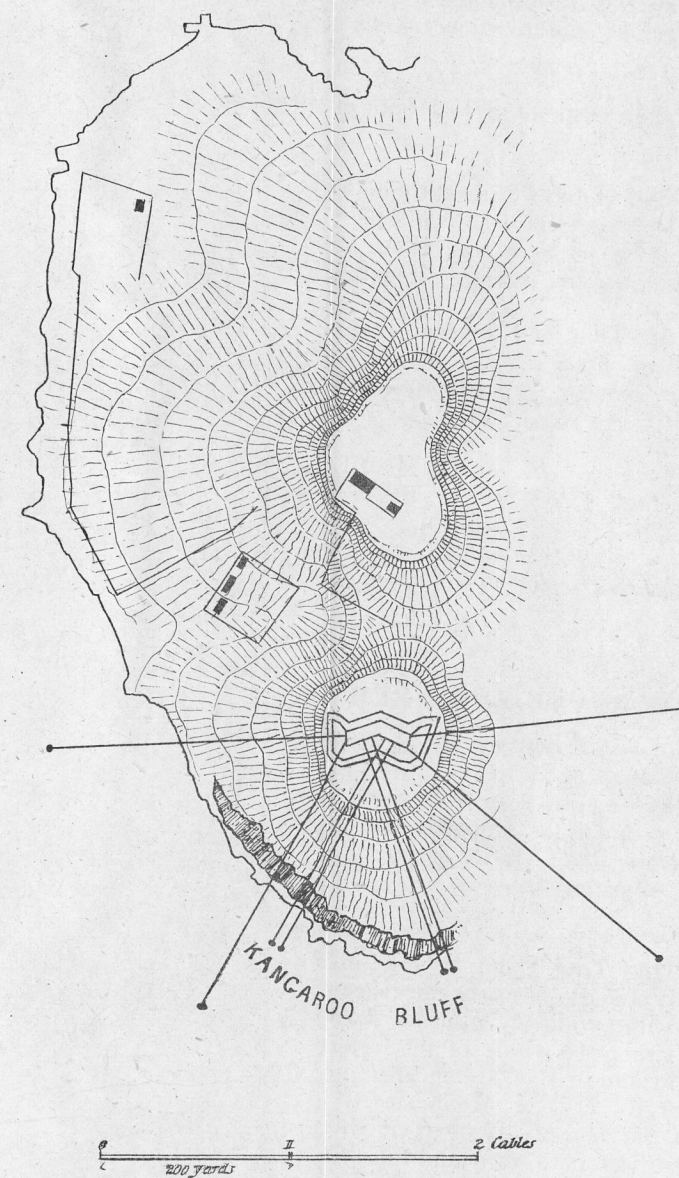


FIG. 3

PLAN OF PROPOSED BATTERY ON
KANGAROO PT.

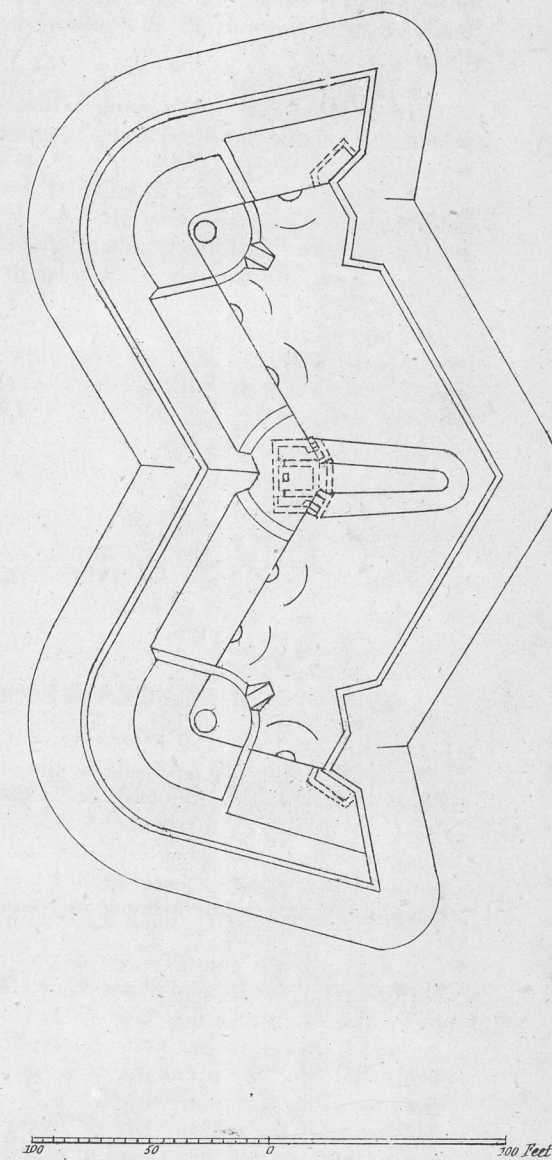
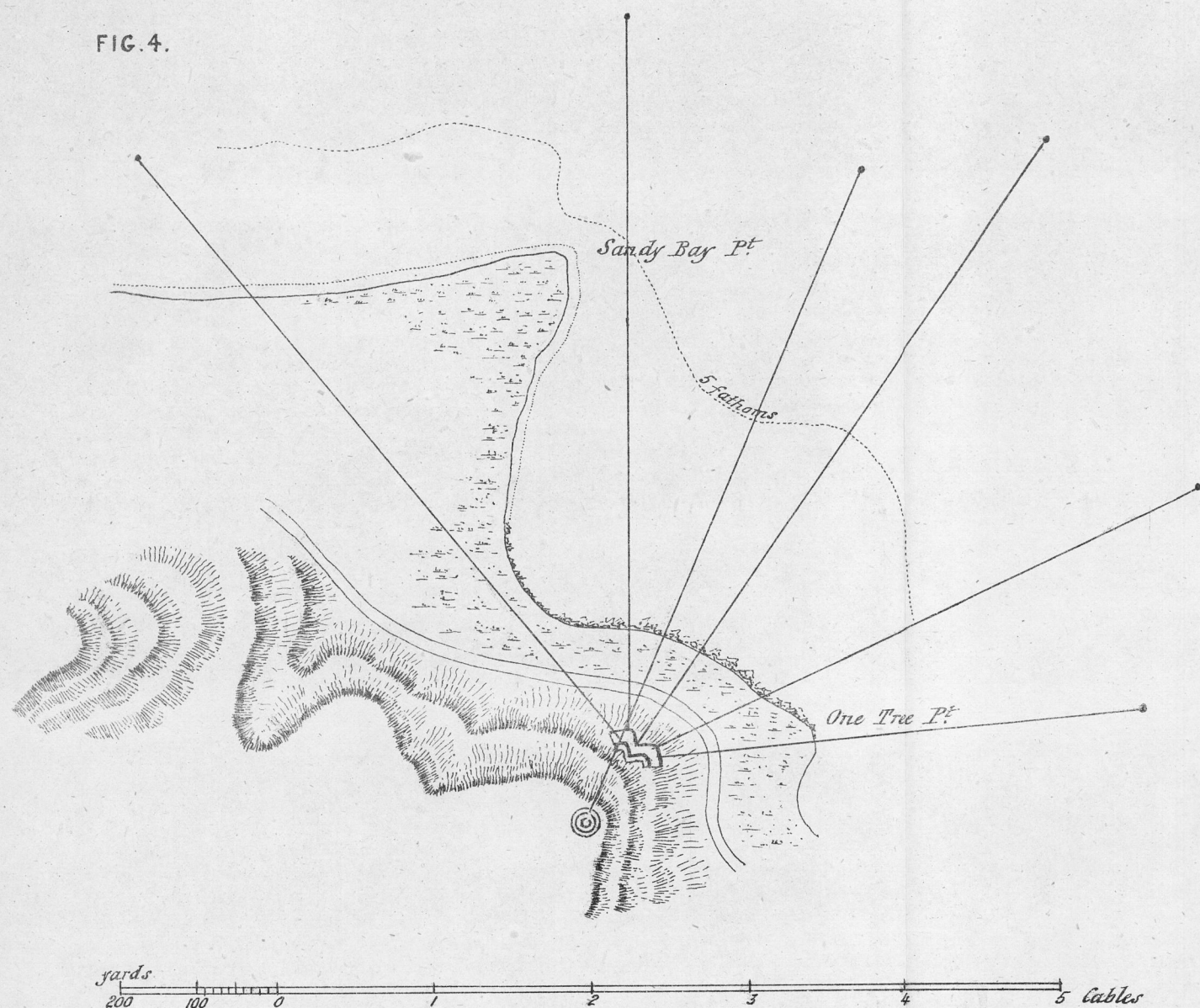
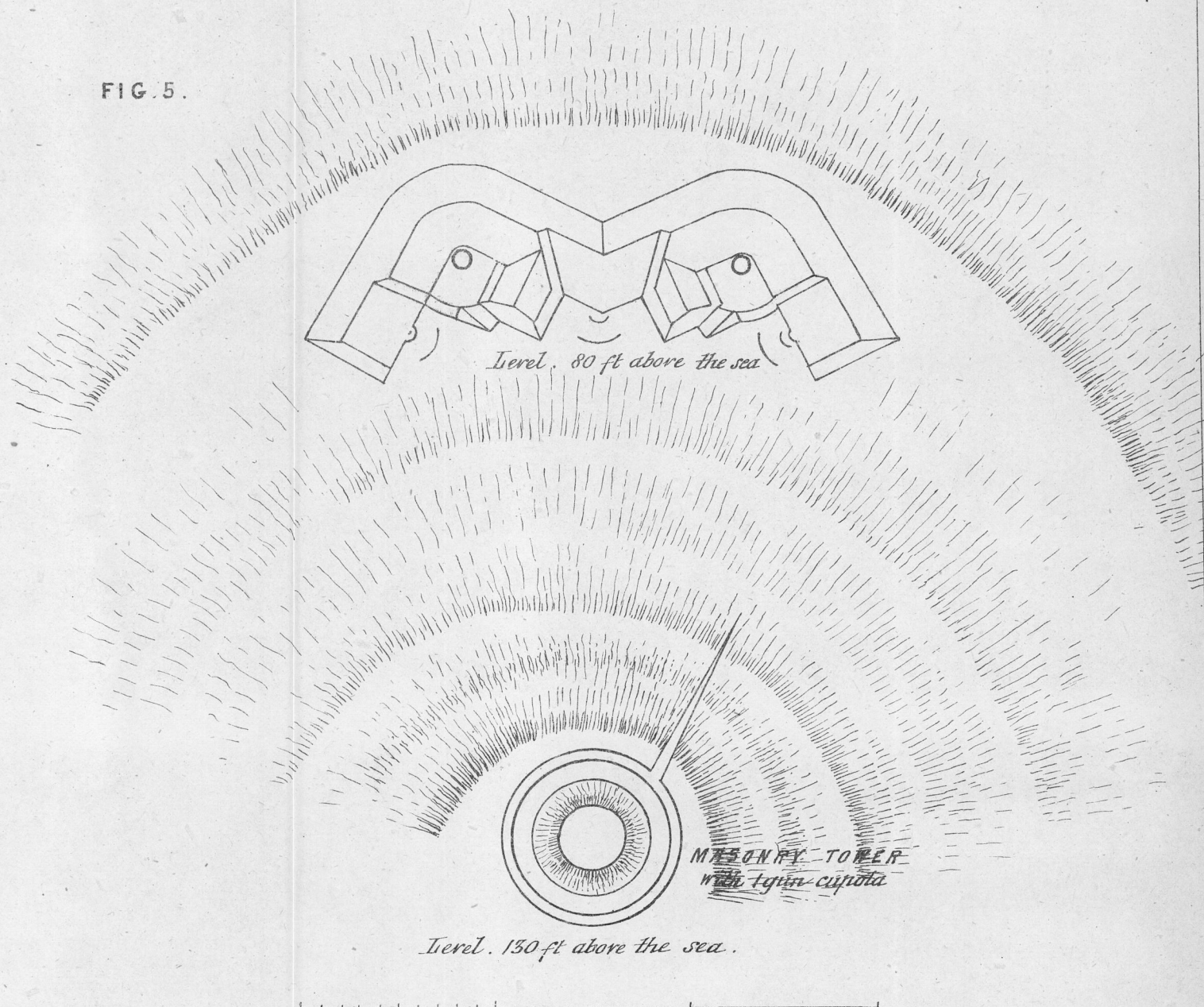


FIG. 4.



PLAN OF PROPOSED BATTERY
NEAR SANDY BAY

FIG. 5.



I have reason to believe that there are at present in store two 7-ton rifled guns and one 70-pounder also rifled. The former I would propose to place in battery at One Tree Point, and the latter to strengthen the armament of the Queen's Battery, where the other two imported rifle guns are now mounted.

I must not omit to mention that very efficient support may be obtained by the use of the 32-pound howitzers (in store) on either flank of the Queen's Battery, or at St. George's Hill or Monastereet, as required; these guns throwing shells with very good effect up to 1000 yards, and being moved at will with great rapidity.

RICHARD WARREN, *Captain R.E., and Major
Commanding Royal Engineer.*

*Royal Engineer's Office,
Hobart Town, 9th January, 1871.*

No. 4.

Government House, Tasmania, January 27th, 1871.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward for your Lordship's information a Memorandum addressed to me by my Responsible Advisers, together with a Report by the Commanding Officer of Royal Engineers, on the subject of the present state of the Defences of this Colony.

2. The recent intelligence of the very critical state of the relations between England and Russia has naturally created considerable anxiety as to the defenceless state of this harbour; and immediately after the arrival of the January Mail I deemed it to be my duty to urge the Ministry to take some definite action on the subject.

3. In their reply, herewith enclosed, the Ministers have entered very fully into the question, and have stated the steps they are now taking in order to protect this harbour, so far as it is possible to do so, by land Batteries alone. They, however, as your Lordship will observe, call my attention to the opinion which both Military and Naval Authorities have repeatedly expressed with regard to this harbour, viz.—that without the co-operation of a gun-boat or floating battery of some kind it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to render it secure from the attack of even a solitary cruiser. While, therefore, my Advisers state that they are prepared to incur the expenditure necessary for the erection and armament of the requisite land Batteries, and the maintenance of a Force sufficient to man them, they ask for the assurance, in the event of an actual outbreak of war with any Naval Power, that the Imperial Government will despatch a gun-boat or armed vessel of some kind to Hobart Town to be stationed in the harbour, and to co-operate with the land Batteries in its defence during the period such war may last.

4. In my Despatch of the 6th of August, 1870, I have already brought this question under your Lordship's notice, and pointed out both the present defenceless state of this harbour, and the facility of access which it offers at all times even to vessels of the largest class. I need hardly point out the disastrous consequences that would ensue, not merely to Tasmania but to the shipping and commerce of the whole of these Colonies, were this harbour and town to be once occupied by a hostile naval force, and converted, as it might then easily be, into the head quarters of the enemy. This, however, is a general danger which could be only met, as I apprehend, by the presence in Australian waters of a squadron sufficiently powerful to cope with any hostile force that might be likely to be sent into them. The especial cases to which the Memorandum of my Advisers is directed, is that of dangers to the Ports of Hobart Town or Launceston from the attack of such solitary cruisers as by evading the vigilance of the squadron might have the power of laying the Colony under contribution, and inflicting on it heavy pecuniary loss. I have represented to them strongly that special Imperial assistance to meet a case of this kind cannot be expected unless the Colony is prepared to co-operate in its own defence; and I certainly think they are justified in their assertion, that the efforts they are making are quite as great as can reasonably be expected of them in the present very limited resources of Tasmania, and that the expenditure they are prepared to incur is proportionately commensurate with that of any other of the group of Australasian Colonies.

5. I therefore strongly recommend their request to the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I have the honor, &c.,

(Signed) CHARLES DU CANE.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF KIMBERLEY.

TASMANIA.
No. 33.

Downing-street, 19th December, 1870.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch, No. 30, of 6th August, enclosing a Memorandum prepared by the Colonial Secretary, with a copy of the Minutes and Resolutions of the Intercolonial Conference at Melbourne, on the subject of the withdrawal of the Troops from the Australian Colonies, and the future defence of Tasmania in the event of war.

Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered the suggestions made by yourself and your Advisers; 1st, that the Head Quarters of the Australian Squadron should be removed from Sydney to Hobart Town; and, secondly, that in default of this measure a vessel of war should be stationed at Hobart Town permanently and for some portion of the year.

They do not under-value the advantages of Hobart Town in its central position, in facility of access, and in the extent of its anchorage, but are of opinion that the advantages of Sydney preponderate as a Head Quarters for a Naval Force in respect to climate, mercantile resources, means of docking, and repairs to machinery.

Her Majesty's Government are not therefore prepared to incur the expense of the proposed removal to Hobart Town.

As regards the second proposal, they cannot station a vessel exclusively at Hobart Town; but the Lords of the Admiralty will renew their instructions to the Commodore to send a vessel to Tasmania whenever the other requirements of the service will admit.

With regard to the general defence of the commerce of the Colony, the only answer which Her Majesty's Government can give to your Despatch is that which I have already had occasion to give to the Governor of Victoria, namely, that in case of war it will be the duty of the Government of this country to apply its means of naval defence for the benefit of the whole empire, according to the judgment it may form of the exigencies of each particular time and place; and that the Australian Governments may rest assured that Her Majesty's Government will not permit itself to be found in such a position as to be unable to protect interests so important as those which are concerned in the Australian Trade.

I may mention that a corresponding assurance was given in 1865 to the Representatives of Canada, who came over to this country for the purpose of conferring with Her Majesty's Government on various questions affecting the Dominion.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

KIMBERLEY.

Governor DU CANE.

Government House, January 28th, 1871.

MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

DURING the recent stay of H.M.S. *Blanche* in this harbour, I have taken the opportunity of asking the opinion of Captain Montgomerie on various points connected with the harbour defences. As I think that the opinions of an experienced Naval officer on such an important subject cannot be otherwise than of value to those who have to deal with it, I have thought it expedient to place them before my Advisers as speedily as possible.

2. Although in Captain Montgomerie's opinion the most efficient harbour defence would be a monitor or floating shot-proof battery of some description, he attached great importance to the erection of a battery at One Tree Point, as proposed in the recent report of the Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers. He considered that a battery of two 7-ton guns mounted there *en barbette*, as proposed in that report and the plans accompanying it, ought to exercise a most powerful influence in arresting the progress of any single hostile cruiser which would be likely to visit these waters. The great advantage of selecting One Tree Point as the site of such a battery would be, that the entrance of any such vessel would be arrested at a point from which it would be impossible for its fire in any way to damage the City of Hobart Town or the shipping in the harbour; and Captain Montgomerie was far from supposing that it would be an easy task for an enemy's cruiser to pass under the fire of such a battery without sustaining in all probability very serious injury, even if her progress was not altogether arrested.

3. It was his opinion, however, that the battery at One Tree Point should be supplemented by batteries at Kangaroo Bluff and Mona-street, in order to render the harbour secure, so far as security can be given by land batteries alone. I wish, however, to draw my Advisers' attention to the fact that if only one supplementary battery was to be erected, Captain Montgomerie attached greater importance to one at Mona-street than at Kangaroo Bluff. As he pointed out to me, in the event of a vessel getting between the Kangaroo Bluff Battery and the Town the guns of the battery could hardly be brought to bear on her without injuring the Town as well, while the vessel could fire on the Town with impunity. On the other hand, the fire of the Mona-street Battery would act as a direct protection to the Town, and could draw no more fire upon the town in return than it would receive were no such battery in existence.

4. In reference to the working of the proposed battery at One Tree Point, Captain Montgomerie was of opinion that the two guns mounted on traversing platforms, as proposed by Major Warren, would not require more than seven men at each gun to work them.

5. He further stated that thirty or forty men with rifles, taking advantage of their knowledge of the position, would form an ample reserve or covering party in the event of an attempt being made to land with a view of capturing the battery, from the ordinary Men-of-war visiting these waters.

6. From the Memorandum which my Advisers have just addressed to me in reply to mine of the 7th of January, and which I have forwarded by this Mail with a covering Despatch for the information of the Secretary of State, I am glad to find that steps have been already taken for the acquisition of the site of the One Tree Point Battery for public purposes, and that the construction of this work will be immediately commenced and completed with all possible despatch.

7. I am also glad to be informed that, looking to the grave position of affairs in Europe, and the uncertainty of the relations of England with the United States of America, my Advisers have now under consideration measures for placing the Volunteer Corps on a more satisfactory footing, and for securing the services of the existing Corps irrespectively of the news which may be received by the next English mail. The intelligence received by the last mail, though for the moment relieving us from the grave apprehensions we had previously entertained that war might have been already declared between England and Russia, cannot be taken, I fear, as any guarantee that the danger with which we are menaced has passed away. Not an hour of the breathing time which is now afforded us should be unnecessarily wasted in delaying such measures for self-defence as come fairly within the resources of the Colony. I may add, too, that the more promptly and energetically the programme announced in the Ministerial Memorandum is carried out, the stronger will be the claim of the Colony to that special assistance and protection which the Imperial Government have been invited to render in the event of an actual outbreak of hostilities.

CHARLES DU CANE.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 21st February, 1871.

MEMORANDUM.

HIS Excellency's Ministers have learned with satisfaction from the Governor's minute, under date the 28th ultimo, that such an experienced Naval officer as Captain Montgomerie, commanding H.M.S. *Blanche*, approves the selection of One Tree Point as the site for a battery for the protection of the city and harbour of Hobart Town from the attack of an enemy's war ship, or a Letter of Marque.

It is satisfactory to find the opinions on this point of the Engineer Officers, Major Warren and Lieutenant Lloyd, substantially sustained by Captain Montgomerie.

Acting upon Major Warren's views, as set forth in the report by that Officer appended to Mr. Wilson's Memorandum of the 14th ultimo, HIS Excellency's Ministers have caused the proposed battery to be commenced at once. It is now in course of construction by a strong body of workmen under Major Warren's immediate supervision. This work will be prosecuted to completion without delay. The construction of one or more supplementary batteries may be reserved for future consideration and the action of Parliament.

The Governor's Advisers are obliged by the communication of Captain Montgomerie's views on the subject of working the guns in the new battery, and on the means of protecting it by a covering party from attack in the rear.

But there seems to be little reason to apprehend an attack from the boats of any single ship. The proximity of the battery to town would enable a strong covering party to be despatched for its relief at the shortest notice; and in war time there would always be concentrated in Hobart Town a force of volunteers or militia sufficiently strong to spare a detachment for this description of service.

The Governor's Advisers take this opportunity of transmitting to His Excellency Major Warren's report, with plan, on the proposed alterations in the West Tamar battery, for placing the guns there *en barbette*. This work will be proceeded with at once.

His Excellency's recent visit to this battery will enable the Governor to estimate the effect and value of the alterations suggested by Major Warren.

The difficulties of the Tamar navigation are the surest protection of Launceston; and the removal of the buoys and landmarks, which now facilitate the entrance to that river, would suffice to baffle the most skilful and enterprising seamanship, and prove a more effectual defence than any battery. The adoption of this precaution, should occasion arise, in conjunction with the contemplated improvement in the West Tamar battery, may be regarded as a sufficient guarantee for the complete security of Launceston.

The provision for the general defence of Hobart Town from the attack of a hostile force has always assumed the indispensable element of Imperial assistance in the shape of one or more of Her Majesty's ships, or of a shot-proof floating battery or monitor. It seems to be admitted by both naval and military authority that the three batteries in the Domain, at Battery Point, and One Tree Point suffice to protect the capital from insult by any single cruiser likely to visit these seas on a predatory mission.

The Governor's Advisers share His Excellency's views on the uncertainty of the political situation in Europe, and on the necessity for a prompt exhibition of readiness to make provisions for self-defence as the strongest claim to Imperial assistance.

They venture to believe that the action already taken in this direction, and the measures now under consideration with the same object, will be found equal to the exigencies of the occasion, and prove such as will command the approval of the local Legislature, and satisfy the requisitions of Her Majesty's Government.

J. M. WILSON.

His Excellency the Governor.

No. 8.

Government House, Tasmania, 23rd February, 1871.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward to your Lordship copies of two Memorandums that have recently been exchanged between my Responsible Advisers and myself, together with a further Report from the Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers with plans, relating to the harbour defences of this Colony.

2. These documents will give your Lordship information as to the works now in progress; and I trust that the efforts of my Government in this direction will be further stimulated by the assurance conveyed in your Lordship's Despatch of the 19th of December last, that in the event of any outbreak of hostilities actually occurring prompt measures will be taken by the Imperial Government to provide, according to the exigencies of the case, for the maritime protection of these Colonies.

I have the honor to be,
My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES DU CANE.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF KIMBERLEY.

TASMANIA.
No. 16.

Downing-street, 20th April, 1871.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge your Despatch No. 4, of 27th January, enclosing a Memorandum by your Responsible Advisers, and a Report by the Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers, respecting the present state of the Defences of Tasmania.

My Despatch No. 33, of 19th December, which has crossed yours, answers by anticipation most of the points raised in your present Despatch.

With reference, however, to the assurance asked for by your Advisers, that in the event of an actual outbreak of War with any Foreign Power an armed vessel should be sent to Hobart Town, I have to observe that, whilst every effort would be made to afford protection to all parts of the Empire as far as the circumstances would admit, it would seriously embarrass the operations of the Navy to give any specific pledge respecting the employment of Her Majesty's Ships, which must be governed by a variety of contingencies which it is impossible to foresee; and that it would be plainly impracticable to attach a vessel of the British Navy to every important port in Her Majesty's Dominions.

I need scarcely assure you that Her Majesty's Government highly appreciate the energy and spirit shown by the Tasmanian Government in the measures which it has taken to provide for the defence of the Colony.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,
KIMBERLEY.

Governor DU CANE.

TASMANIA.
No. 18.

Downing-street, 8th May, 1871.

SIR,

I HAVE to acknowledge your Despatch No. 8, of 23rd February, with the various documents enclosed in it, showing the works in progress for the harbour defences of Tasmania.

I have already conveyed to you the recognition by Her Majesty's Government of the energy shown by the Government of Tasmania in the measures taken for the defence of the Colony; and I have to express their satisfaction at the measures reported in your present Despatch.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,
KIMBERLEY.

Governor DU CANE.

MEMORANDUM on Lord KIMBERLEY'S Despatches, 20th April and 8th May, 1871, on the Harbour Defences of Tasmania.

IN returning the Despatches mentioned above to the Governor, Mr. Wilson desires to offer some observations in reply to the views expressed by the Secretary of State on the assurance asked for by this Government, that in the event of a war with any foreign power one of Her Majesty's ships should be sent to Hobart Town.

The circumstances of Tasmania, and the peculiarities of the position of Hobart Town on a broad and open estuary of the sea, accessible to sailing vessels under every contingency of tide and weather, seem to constitute an exceptional claim upon the Imperial Government for the specific assurance of the protection of a war ship stationed in this harbour in war time.

The capital of Victoria is very differently situated in this respect. The entrance to Hobson's Bay is embarrassed with a bar, which the removal of land-marks and buoys, and the absence of pilots, would render sufficiently dangerous, if not impracticable, for vessels of any size; while batteries at the Heads command the passage with heavy guns. Yet these advantages have been supplemented by the presence of the *Cerberus*; and with such a floating battery always stationed in Hobson's Bay, Melbourne may be considered as effectually secured against the hostile attack of predatory cruisers, or of any naval force likely to be detached for that purpose from the fleets of any foreign power at war with Great Britain.

Sydney, again, is more fortunately situated in this respect than Hobart Town. The entrance to Port Jackson is narrow, and easily defensible by batteries; and that harbour is already the headquarters of the Australian command, and the Naval Depot for Her Majesty's ships.

The capital of South Australia is also protected by the peculiarities of its situation from the dangers of attack by sea. The port might be visited by a ship of war, or letters of marque. But Adelaide itself could only be assailed by a party landed with that object, which the local forces would almost certainly prove equal to repel.

The completion of the Alexandra Battery at One Tree Point, which will be armed with three heavy guns, even when supplemented by another battery in Mona-street as strongly recommended by Captain Montgomerie, would scarcely suffice to render Hobart Town secure from naval attack in the absence of the co-operation of a gun-boat or monitor capable of being easily and rapidly moved up to attack the enemy or cover the town: as has been observed in a former Memorandum, "the provision for the general defence of Hobart Town has always assumed the indispensable element of Imperial assistance in the shape of one or more of Her Majesty's ships, or of a shot-proof floating battery or monitor."

Unless there were some certainty of assurance on this point, it may be doubted whether Parliament would be disposed to sanction any considerable additions to the expense already incurred in the construction of batteries.

His Excellency's Advisers are strongly of opinion that, considering the circumstances already adverted to, the withdrawal of Her Majesty's Troops, the scantiness of the financial resources and numerical strength of the population of Tasmania (already heavily taxed for the maintenance of the indispensable institutions of a regular Government and the prosecution of public works), the Colony is entitled to expect a positive assurance that in the event of war a shot-proof gun-boat should be permanently stationed in the Derwent to co-operate with the land batteries and local forces for the defence of Hobart Town.

The reorganisation of the Volunteer Force, a measure now imperatively forced on the attention of the Government, would probably be, to a certain extent, impeded by the absence of a definite guarantee of this description of co-operative support, which military and naval authorities combine to pronounce an essential requisite for the proper protection of the Port and City of Hobart Town from foreign aggression.

Mr. Wilson has deemed it right, in view of the language adopted by Lord Kimberley on this subject, to place on record the reasons and considerations which, in the opinion of His Excellency's Advisers, constitute for Tasmania a stronger claim upon the naval protection of the Imperial Government in time of war than can be advanced by other Australian Colonies with denser populations, superior natural advantages, and larger financial resources.

J. M. WILSON.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 9th August, 1871.

His Excellency the Governor.

No. 35.

Government House, Tasmania, August 10th, 1871.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to forward to your Lordship a Memorandum addressed to me by the Colonial Secretary of this Colony in reference to your Lordship's Despatches of the 20th of April and 8th of May, 1871, on the harbour defences of Tasmania.

2. In my Despatches of the 5th of August, 1870, 27th of January, and 23rd of February, 1871, I have already dealt fully with the subjects adverted to in this Memorandum, and I feel that it is unnecessary for me to trouble your Lordship with any lengthened observations on the present occasion. I will merely remark, that it is only natural that my Advisers should be anxious that the great facilities of access to an enemy presented by the estuary of the Derwent, as compared with the harbours of Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide, should be fully laid before the Imperial Government, as well as the financial inability of the Colony to do more than it is now doing to strengthen its land and harbour defences. I have no doubt, however, from the tenor of your Lordship's Despatch of the 20th of April last, that Her Majesty's Government fully understands and appreciates the peculiarities of Hobart Town harbour, and that in the event of an outbreak of war every effort would be made to give protection to those portions of Her Majesty's Colonial possessions which most needed it, and where hostile attack was to be most seriously apprehended.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES DU CANE.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF KIMBERLEY.

JAMES BARNARD,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.