

(No. 85.)



1880.

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T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

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C O L O N E L S T. H I L L :

Papers having reference to Removal from his position as Commandant  
and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces.

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Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be  
printed, September 3, 1880.



*PAPERS having reference to the Removal of COLONEL ST. HILL from his position as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces.*

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1.

MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

It is the Governor's painful duty to inform Ministers that it has become incumbent on him to report Colonel St. Hill, Commandant, late his Private Secretary and A.D.C., to the Home Authorities for conduct unbecoming to an officer and gentleman in reference to an account at the Commercial Bank entrusted to him by the Governor; but in consideration of Colonel St. Hill's long and varied services, including distinguished service in the field in New Zealand, and of his efforts in organising the Volunteer Force in this Colony, and of its present exigencies, and for the sake of his family, the Governor has requested the Home Authorities to deal as leniently as possible with the case, and to allow Colonel St. Hill at the expiration of six months to retire from Her Majesty's Service on the usual terms.

FRED. A. WELD,  
*Governor and Commander-in-Chief.*

*Government House, Hobart Town, January 16, 1880.*

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2.

MEMO.

SOME weeks prior to the receipt of the foregoing Memorandum, Colonel St. Hill had requested to be allowed to retire from his position as Commandant at the expiration of Six months from 1st January, 1880; and Ministers, having no official complaint against Colonel St. Hill, nor any official knowledge of any delinquencies on his part calling for their interference, had assented to this request.

Upon this Memorandum being received, Ministers did not consider it contained any charge against Colonel St. Hill necessitating action on their part, as His Excellency's Memorandum did not disclose any criminal offence, and, from its concluding paragraph, appeared to be in agreement with their previous action in consenting to allow Colonel St. Hill, "at the expiration of Six months to retire from Her Majesty's service" as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces.

No reply, therefore, was sent to this Memorandum, and no action taken upon it.

W. R. GIBLIN.

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3.

MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

I CHARGE Colonel W. H. St. Hill, Commandant, late my Private Secretary and A.D.C., for having behaved in a scandalous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, in having misused the confidential trust vested in him by me, whose A.D.C. and Private Secretary he then was, to appropriate a large sum of money from an account of mine at the Commercial Bank to his own purposes.

FRED. A. WELD, *Governor.*

*Government House, 19th March, 1880.*

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## MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

In a Memorandum dated 16th January, 1880, the Governor informed Ministers that it had become "incumbent upon him to report Colonel St. Hill, Commandant, late his Private Secretary and A.D.C., to the Home Authorities for conduct unbecoming to an officer and a gentleman in reference to an account at the Commercial Bank entrusted to him by the Governor."

The Governor has been appointed to another Colony and will shortly take his departure, and recent circumstances render it necessary that Ministers should have proof in their possession of the truth of the charge made by the Governor against Colonel St. Hill.

The Governor therefore transmits to them—

1. Copy statement by Mr. Barclay, the Manager of the Commercial Bank, Hobart Town ;
2. Copy of a letter relating to balance sheet drawn up by Mr. Pretzman, Colonel St. Hill's Accountant ;
3. Copy statement by Mr. George Browne concerning a cheque drawn on No. 2 Account by Colonel St. Hill, and copy of such cheque.

The Governor understands that before his Memorandum of the 16th January reached Ministers they had already, on grounds of public policy, informed Colonel St. Hill that his request to be allowed to retain his position of Commandant till 30th June would be complied with.

Will Ministers advise whether, under circumstances now existing, they still desire to retain Colonel St. Hill as Commandant, or whether he is at liberty to rejoin his regiment ?

FRED. A. WELD, *Governor.*

*Government House, 19th March, 1880.*

## 5.

*Commercial Bank, Hobart Town, Tasmania, 19th March, 1880.*

DEAR SIR,

IN reply to your note dated this day, I have to say—

1. That, on the 20th July, 1877, you wrote to me as follows:—"Will you open a No. 2 account on my behalf in the name of Lieut.-Colonel W. H. St. Hill, as you did in Mr. Blundell's case. It is more convenient that the Aide-de-Camp should give the cheques, as he keeps the accounts. You might as well put £100 to that account at once and debit me with it, and send a large cheque book and a bank book to Colonel St. Hill." And that, in accordance with this request, an account was opened and called "Col. St. Hill, No. 2 Account," by a transfer of £100 from your private account, and that this account was operated upon by Colonel St. Hill.

2. That it was always clearly understood by the bank and Col. St. Hill that the moneys paid into and drawn from this account were yours, and that you were responsible to the bank for any overdraft. The interest charged was paid by you.

Col. St. Hill had a private account, and occasionally cheques intended for the No. 2 account were charged to this account in consequence of Col. St. Hill omitting to write No. 2 account upon the face of the cheques. Upon one occasion Col. St. Hill requested me to charge his private cheques to the No. 2 account rather than dishonor them: this I declined to do, under date 4th August, 1879, in the following terms:—

"Referring to our interview of this morning, I have now to advise you that upon reconsideration I must decline to charge cheques to your *No. 2 account*, unless it is clearly stated on the face of such cheques that they are drawn upon that account."

Yours faithfully,

C. J. BARCLAY, *Managing Director.*

*His Excellency FRED. A. WELD, Esq.*

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Hobart Town, 31st December, 1879.

DEAR SIR,

In compliance with your request that I would make up a Statement of Account between yourself and His Excellency, I have now to report that from the book and papers put into my hands I found them very confused, and consequently a complication of accounts which has taken me a considerable time to investigate; and I am not surprised at any one not accustomed to this kind of work finding a difficulty in adjusting them, especially as the way in which they appear to have been made up into monthly statements without having the actual accounts as a foundation to work upon, estimates only being taken, which tend to confuse and cause mistakes.

It is much to be regretted also for your own sake that the accounts as furnished by you to His Excellency should have been allowed to remain unchecked or unexamined when rendered, which would have enabled you, whilst the particulars were fresh in your memory, to correct any inaccuracy.

The monthly statements furnished to me being made upon an insecure basis, I have deemed it advisable to ignore them, and have made up your accounts from—

1. The book containing a record of accounts paid by you;
2. The butts of the several cheque books;
3. The bank pass books;
4. The travelling book of His Excellency, and any other reliable papers obtainable;

and now beg to enclose accounts showing how all moneys received by you from July, 1877, to November, 1879, have been accounted for, together with an account current between His Excellency and yourself showing a balance of £1405 8s. 11d. due by you to His Excellency.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Colonel ST. HILL, Government Cottage.

WM. PRETYMAN.

7.

LETTER from COLONEL ST. HILL to the GOVERNOR accompanying Account.

1 P.M., 31st December, 1879.

YOUR EXCELLENCY.

I HAVE only just received the accounts from Mr. Pretzman, and have handed them over for transmission to Your Excellency.

I can make no comments on them as I am completely bewildered about them. All I can say is, the amount is far larger than I ever imagined could be possible.

I am endeavouring to obtain the necessary sum, and have hopes of being successful, some friends having already signified their willingness to guarantee amounts, forming a considerable portion of the amount with this object.

Should I fail in my endeavours, either wholly or partially, I trust Your Excellency will give me until July next, when my commission will increase £1000 in value, before sending in my papers to sell out; and out of the proceeds of which I shall then be able to pay in full. I have seen, and am to see again, a Solicitor on this subject with the view of placing this on a proper business footing.

Thanking Your Excellency for the consideration with which you are treating me and mine, with bitter bitter regrets at all that has happened, more especially after all your great kindness to me for more than two years, and hoping for your forgiveness,

I am,

Your Excellency's obediently,

W. H. ST. HILL

Note on above letter by the Governor.

[N.B.—I declined to receive moneys or securities after the receipt of the accounts and this letter, having now reason to believe him hopelessly bankrupt; that my doing so might be misrepresented as condoning his offence, and that anything that he might be able to pay was the property of his creditors generally; and I so informed my Solicitor and Banker.

F. A. W.]

6.

8.

MEMORANDUM.

Will Mr. George Browne be so good as to state for the Governor's information the circumstances under which Col. St. Hill paid a sum of £75 to Mr. Browne's credit in the Commercial Bank, Hobart Town, on or about the 21st January, 1878, out of No. 2 account?

FRED. A. WELD.

Government House, 19th March, 1880.

9.

MEMO.

At the request of Colonel St. Hill I obtained for him on 21st December, 1877, a draft on London in favour of Messrs. Price and Bowstead for the sum of £100, for which I drew a cheque on my private account in the Commercial Bank, Hobart Town. The following memorandum appears on the butt of the cheque:—"No. 38, 21 Dec., 1877. St. Hill. Loan £101 11s. 0d. Draft London. Price & Bowstead."

On the 21st January, 1878, Colonel St. Hill paid in to my credit at the bank referred to the sum of £75, and subsequently he handed to me the balance of the amount advanced, in gold.

GEO. BROWNE.

19th March, 1880.

I ENCLOSE a copy of a cheque dated 21st January, 1878, which includes the amount above referred to, drawn on No. 2 account, and signed by Colonel St. Hill.

I also certify that I have no knowledge of, and have never had dealings with, or authorised the transmission of any money to Messrs. Price and Bowstead.

FRED. A. WELD.

Copy of Cheque.

No. 2. Account.

No. 276.

Commercial Bank, Hobart Town, 21st January, 1878.

CASHIER OF THE COMMERCIAL BANK.

PAY Self or Bearer Eighty-five Pounds.

£85.

W. H. ST. HILL, Lt.-Col.

Endorsed—£75 to Ct. G. Browne.  
10/1

10.

30. 11. '79.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I HAVE treated you with gross ingratitude. I have repaid your uniform kindness to me by most improper conduct. I thank you from my heart, in the name of my wife and children, for your consideration and for granting me leave of absence.

I wish to disclaim, on my own and wife's behalf, in the plainest manner having taken any part in the rumours which, I am told, are abroad in reference to Your Excellency's treatment of me. I will do my best to stop the circulation of such calumnies, and have already taken active steps to do so.

I can assure you that I shall never forget the obligation under which Your Excellency has placed me and mine.

I am,

Your Excellency's obediently,

W. H. ST. HILL.

## MEMORANDUM FOR MINISTERS.

On the afternoon of the 18th March I received a letter, dated 6th March, addressed to me by Colonel St. Hill, Commandant, asking me to return to him a confession of guilt which he had forwarded to me on the 18th January, 1880, and alleging that I had obtained that confession from him under compulsion; the fact being that I had, on the contrary, directed that he should be told that if he preferred to plead guilty I would accept that confession, but that I had ample proof of his guilt, and that it was for him to decide whether he thought it best in the interest of his family to throw himself unreservedly on my mercy and that of the Home Authorities or to stand on his defence. Colonel St. Hill preferred the former course, after I had carefully sent him warning that, if he ever denied his guilt or my great consideration and leniency, that letter of confession would be made use of: and I received a message from him of the deepest gratitude in return. At his further urgent request I delayed the despatch containing the report for a month, writing unofficially (as I sent him word that it was my duty to do so) to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach to say that the report had been delayed by me to enable the Authorities, should they see fit, to allow Colonel St. Hill to sell out, as it was impossible that he could continue to wear Her Majesty's uniform, pleading for his family and urging his long services.

But before the month of grace had elapsed it became known to me that Colonel St. Hill was seeking to impugn my conduct and take an undue advantage of my leniency. It therefore became necessary for me to append his confession to my report, and no longer to request, as I had intended to do, that the despatch should if possible be considered as confidential. But now Colonel St. Hill has demanded to be permitted to withdraw the confession of guilt and plea for mercy contained in his letter of 18th January. I have always offered him the alternative course, and I do so now. I have already withdrawn my despatch which briefly stated his action, enclosed his confession and plea for mercy, and strongly urged, for the sake of his family and services, that his case should be as leniently dealt with as the Authorities might think possible. I have also informed the Secretary of State that full proofs of Colonel St. Hill's guilt are in my possession. I now request Ministers, if they so advise, to return to Colonel St. Hill his letter\* to me of 18th January, containing a confession and plea for mercy, and also a copy of this Memorandum.

It must be clearly understood by Ministers that my view of the case rests wholly and purely, not on Colonel Hill's confession, but upon direct proof of his guilt, some of which I already have laid before Ministers.

FRED. A. WELD, *Governor.*

*Government House, Hobart Town, 22nd March, 1880.*

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\* Letter from Colonel St. Hill to Governor enclosed.

## 12.

*Colonial Secretary's Office, 22nd March, 1880.*

SIR,

I AM directed by His Excellency the Governor in Council to inform you that you are required by the Governor in Council to reply to the following charge preferred against you by His Excellency the Governor:—

That you have behaved in a scandalous manner, unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman, in having misused the confidential trust vested in you by the Governor, whose Aide-de-Camp and Private Secretary you then were, to appropriate a large sum of money from an account of the Governor's at the Commercial Bank to your own purposes.

The Governor has forwarded to Ministers certain documents in support of such charge, of which I now forward you copies.\*

Should you desire to make your defence in person before the Governor in Council, an Executive Council will be held for that purpose on Thursday next, at 3 p.m., on your notifying your wish to that effect; but should you prefer to make a written defence, time will be given you till Thursday, at 3 p.m., to send it in.

In the interim you will consider yourself suspended from the office of Commandant by authority of the Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

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\* Wm. Pretyman to Col. St. Hill, 31st December, 1879. C. J. Barclay to His Excellency Fred. A. Weld, 19th March, 1880. The Governor to Geo. Browne, Esq., 19th March, 1880. Geo. Browne to His Excellency the Governor, 19th March, 1880. Memo. by the Governor with a copy of cheque.

I have also to forward you a copy of a Memorandum\* by His Excellency the Governor, received by Ministers this day, and to enclose you the original document therein referred to.

I have &c.

W. R. GIBLIN,  
For the Colonial Secretary, absent.

Colonel W. H. ST. HILL, Pressland House.

\* Memo. for Ministers from His Excellency the Governor, dated 22nd March, with original communication from Col. St. Hill to His Excellency of the 18th January, 1880.

### 13.

RECEIVED 12:15 P.M., 24. 3. 80.—W. R. GIBLIN.  
READ to Attorney-General, Minister of Lands, and Dr. Agnew immediately on receipt.—W. R. G.  
READ to His Excellency the Governor same afternoon.—W. R. G.  
REPLIED to same afternoon.—W. R. G.

Hobart Town, 23rd March, 1880.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge, at a late hour last evening, your letter of the 22nd instant.

I request that the Government will defer the holding of the Executive Council, before which they make me the offer of presenting myself, one week, viz. to Thursday the 1st April, instead of the day after to-morrow, which does not give me sufficient time to make my preparations for defending myself. The Easter holidays intervening, reduces the postponement I ask for to one of practically three (3) days.

I claim also to meet the charge preferred against me before a full Cabinet and not an incomplete one. The charge is a serious one; and I protest against an enquiry which might have been instituted all these months, when all the Ministers were present in Hobart Town, being now conducted without the presence at it of the Minister who is the head of my Department, viz. the Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

I have also the honor to request that no objection be made to my being attended or represented by Counsel on the occasion; and I beg to protest against His Excellency the Governor filling the dual position of President of the tribunal before which I am arraigned as well as that of accuser.

I beg to protest against the exercise by the Governor as "Commander-in-Chief" of an authority which the Queen's Regulations expressly state no "Governor of a Colony" is "invested with," although bearing the title of Commander-in-Chief over Her Majesty's Regular Forces; I refer to His Excellency's action in having "suspended" me "from the office of Commandant."

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,  
W. H. ST. HILL, Colonel,  
Brevet Lieut.-Colonel H. M.'s 19th Regiment.

The Hon. W. R. GIBLIN, the Premier.

### 14.

Treasury, 24th March, 1880.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt, this afternoon, of your letter dated yesterday.

I must confirm my previous letter requiring you to attend at the time named, viz., to-morrow at 3 P.M., at the Executive Council Chamber; or to submit in writing any statements you wish to make; but if you are not then ready to explain why you should be retained in the Civil Service; you can, if you desire it, apply for time.

I do not understand your "claim" to defer the action of the Cabinet until the Colonial Secretary's return from Victoria, which is indefinite, and Ministers see no reason for postponing the matter.

You cannot be allowed to attend by Counsel before the Executive, but can hand in a written statement if you prefer it.

His Excellency the Governor will formally open the Council, but will not preside during that part of the sitting in which your matter is dealt with.

You appear under some misapprehension as to the power and function of the Executive in this matter. Ministers do not propose to constitute a Court Martial to deal with your Commission as a British Officer, nor to assume the functions of the Supreme Court to investigate your guilt or innocence of the crime alleged against you.

Ministers are responsible to Parliament for the manner in which they deal with the Tasmanian Civil Service, and as such have to consider whether, under existing circumstances, you can be suffered to remain in it; but you may rest assured they will take no steps which they do not feel to be demanded by the interests of the public service, and which they are not prepared to justify.

I have, &c.

W. R. GIBLIN.

Lieut. Colonel W. H. ST. HILL.

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15.

RECD. 12:40 P.M., 25. 3. 80.

Hobart Town, 25th March, 1880.

SIR,

WE, the undersigned Members of the Legislature, trust the Government will grant the requests preferred by Col. St. Hill, in his letter to the Premier of the 23rd instant, viz. :—

1. That the matter be considered before a full Cabinet and not in the absence of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.
2. That the time asked for be allowed to enable him to make proper preparations for his defence.

We have the less hesitation in asking this, as we are informed that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary is in *this* Colony, and not, as stated, absent in Victoria.

We further beg to draw the attention of the Government to No. 87 of the "Colonial Rules and Regulations, 1879," viz.—

"87. No suspension from office or stoppage of salary must take place unless such defence has been received and considered, or unless the party makes default in furnishing it when called upon." and submit whether the procedure therein laid down has been observed in the case of Col. St. Hill, who, we understand, has been suspended from his office of Commandant since the 22nd instant, without his defence having been called for in the first instance.

HENRY BUTLER, *Speaker*.  
 WILLIAM LODK. CROWTHER.  
 JAMES THOS. ROBERTSON.  
 EDWARD LODK. CROWTHER.  
 JOHN LORD.  
 A. INGLIS CLARK.  
 ALEX. M'GREGOR.  
 W.M. BELBIN.  
 J. A. GUNN.  
 D. LEWIS.  
 GEO. SALIER.

To the Hon. W. R. GIBLIN, *Esq.*, Premier.

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16.

Colonial Treasury, 25th March, 1880.

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt, this afternoon, of your letter dated this day, requesting that a decision in Colonel St. Hill's case might be deferred until the matter could "be considered before a full Cabinet," and might not be dealt with "in the absence of the Colonial Secretary," and that the time asked for by Colonel St. Hill might be granted "to enable him to make his preparations for his defence." You are pleased to add, that you "have the less hesitation in asking this as you are informed that the Honorable the "Colonial Secretary is in this Colony



and not, as stated, absent in Victoria." This appears to convey a gratuitous imputation of inaccuracy of statement upon me, as I had "stated" my belief that the Colonial Secretary had left for Victoria. I did so on the authority of a telegram from him stating that he was leaving Table Cape that day for Melbourne, and since the receipt of your letter I have made telegraphic enquiry and find that Mr. Moore did leave for Melbourne on Tuesday last. I must be permitted to express my regret that you should have thought fit to pen the paragraph in question without some previous enquiry as to its accuracy.

You must be aware that the Colonial Office Regulation which you quote has no force or application in this self-governing Colony, nor is the course of procedure prescribed for a Crown Colony applicable to, nor has it been adopted by, this Colony.

Under all the circumstances of this very painful case Ministers feel compelled to adhere to the decision they have communicated to Colonel St. Hill, who has this day forwarded me a conditional resignation "under protest." The Government are not able to accept such a resignation, but have enlarged the time till Tuesday next for him to furnish any explanation he may desire of his conduct; an explanation that it may be reasonably supposed he should have at hand, as it appears from his letter that he has for months been aware of the very grave imputations made against him, and on account of which he some time since resigned his position as Private Secretary and Aide-de-Camp to His Excellency the Governor.

I have, &c.

W. R. GIBLIN.

*The Hon. HENRY BUTLER and the other gentlemen signing the letter.*

## 17.

RECD. 2.45 P.M., 25. 3. 80.—W.R.G.

*Hobart Town, 25th March, 1880.*

SIR,

IN the event of the reasonable requests made in my letter to you of the 23rd inst. being still not entertained, I have the honor to tender, under protest, to the Governor-in-Council my resignation as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. ST. HILL, *Col., Bt. Lt.-Col. H.M.'s 19th Regt.*

[*Not addressed.*]

## 18.

*Colonial Treasury, 25th March, 1880.*

SIR,

IN reply to your letter of this day's date, received a few minutes before 3 o'clock this afternoon, I have the honor to state that the Government cannot accept a resignation made conditionally and under protest.

You have failed to attend this day as required, and I have now the honor to inform you that the Executive Council will sit again on Tuesday, at 2.30 P.M., when you are required to attend for the purpose indicated in my previous letter. Should you fail to do so, Ministers must act in your absence.

I am informed by His Excellency the Governor that the matters out of which the charge arises have been before you for some months, and that he has given you abundant opportunities to explain your conduct if it had been susceptible of satisfactory explanation. Under the circumstances Ministers do not consider that any further time should be granted beyond Tuesday next.

I have, &c.

W. R. GIBLIN.

*Colonel ST. HILL, Pressland House.*

## 19.

*Hobart Town, 30th March, 1880.*

SIR,

I BEG to enclose two letters of resignation, leaving it to your discretion which of them you, in your capacity as acting for the Colonial Secretary, deem it advisable to submit to the Executive.

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I also request you will convey to the Executive that I disclaim all intention of disrespect or discourtesy in not presenting myself before them this day. My previous requests having been declined, I do not put in an appearance because I consider the tendering of my resignation now renders such a course unnecessary.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

*The Hon. W. R. GIBLIN, Acting Colonial Secretary.*

W. H. ST. HILL.

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20.

*Hobart Town, 30th March, 1880.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to tender my resignation to the Governor in Council as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces, to take effect from the 30th June next, the date to which the Government informed me early in February last they had decided to retain me.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. ST. HILL, *Col.*  
*Bt. Lt.-Col. 19th Regt.*

*The Hon. W. R. GIBLIN, the Premier.*

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21.

*Hobart Town, 30th March, 1880.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 25th instant.

You informed me in your letter of the 24th instant, that "as Ministers are responsible to Parliament for the manner in which they deal with the Tasmanian Civil Service," they "have to consider whether under existing circumstances" I "can be suffered to remain in it."

It appears to me, therefore, so far as the Civil Service of the Colony is concerned, that the tendering of my resignation in my letter of the 25th inst., and which I now do myself the honor of repeating, terminates all difficulties.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. ST. HILL.

*The Hon. W. R. GIBLIN, the Premier.*

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22.

MINUTE PAPER FOR THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

*Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 30th March, 1880.*

SUBMITTED,

THAT His Excellency the Governor having charged Colonel St. Hill with having behaved in a manner unbecoming the character of an officer and a gentleman in having appropriated a large sum of money from an account of the Governor's at the Commercial Bank to his own purposes, (copy of which charge, together with documentary evidence in support, were duly furnished to Colonel St. Hill on the 22nd instant,) and Colonel St. Hill having failed to appear before the Executive Council or to send in his written defence on Thursday, the 25th instant, as he was called upon to do, but having on the 23rd instant requested that the meeting of the Executive Council should be deferred to the 1st April, which request he was informed on the 24th the Government could not grant, but that he could at such meeting of the Executive Council, if he so desired, apply for an extension of time; and Colonel St. Hill having on the 25th instant tendered his resignation, under protest, of his appointment as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces, and having been informed by the Premier on the same day that the Government could not accept a resignation made conditionally and under protest, but that the Executive Council had been adjourned until Tuesday, the 30th, at 2-30 P.M., when he, Colonel St. Hill, was required

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to attend for the purpose indicated in the Colonial Secretary's letter of the 23rd instant; and Colonel St. Hill having failed to appear as required, and Colonel St. Hill having failed to furnish any written explanation of the charge preferred against him, Ministers have no alternative but to recommend that Colonel St. Hill's services as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Tasmanian Local Forces be dispensed with from this date.

W. R. GIBLIN,  
*For Colonial Secretary, absent.*

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APPROVED.

FRED. A. WELD,  
*Governor and Commander-in-Chief.*  
March 30th, 1880.

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23.

*Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 30th March, 1880.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that in consequence of your failure to attend the meeting of the Executive Council held this day, as required by my letter of the 25th instant, and your not having afforded the Government any explanation in reference to the charge preferred against you by His Excellency the Governor, on the 23rd instant, of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, Ministers have been compelled to recommend, and the Governor has approved, that your services as Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Local Forces of Tasmania be dispensed with from this date.

I have, &c.

W. R. GIBLIN,  
*For Colonial Secretary, absent.*

*Colonel ST. HILL, Pressland House.*

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24.

*Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 31st March, 1880.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that the Governor having been compelled to dispense with the services of Colonel St. Hill, His Excellency has been pleased, pending the appointment of his successor, to appoint you to be Acting Commandant and Inspecting Field Officer of the Local Forces of Tasmania from this date, with salary at the rate of Two hundred Pounds (£200) per annum, and travelling expenses at the rate of Seventy Pounds (£70) a year.

I have, &c.

W. R. GIBLIN,  
*For Colonial Secretary, absent.*

*Lieut.-Colonel HOME, Launceston.*

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[*The following Letters, although of prior date to the institution of the formal charge against Colonel St. Hill, have reference to the office of Commandant, &c., and are therefore printed herewith.*]

25.

*Hobart Town, March 13, 1880.*

SIR,

It being publicly reported that a change in the Commandantship of the Volunteer Force is contemplated, we beg to express our earnest hope that, if such a necessity should arise, the officer entrusted with the command may possess experience and rank in Her Majesty's Service, coupled with such qualifications as will ensure for him the confidence of the Force now enjoyed by Col. St. Hill.

We have no desire to obtrude ourselves into this matter, or in any way to attempt to dictate to the Government the course they should adopt; but we feel impelled by our positions in the Force,

and our knowledge of its requirements, respectfully to ask that, in dealing with the question of a Commanding Officer, the efficiency and well-being of the Force may outweigh all other considerations.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient humble Servants,

EDWARD L. CROWTHER, *Capt. Com. S.T.V.A.*  
 T. M. EVANS, *Capt. S.T.V.A.*  
 J. O'BOYLE, *Captain T.V.R. Regt.*  
 W. H. SMITH, *Captain T.V.R. Regt.*  
 J. G. DAVIES, *Captain T.V.R. Regt.*  
 T. MARSDEN, *Captain T.V.R. Regt.*

*The Honorable* WILLIAM MOORE,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

## 26.

*Hobart Town, 1st March, 1880.*

SIR,

IN the early part of last week it was rumoured through the Rifle Regiment that the Government contemplated making a change in the command of the Local Forces: within the last few days that rumour has assumed a more definite form, and it is now a matter of public as well as regimental comment that such a change will positively take place.

The subscribers to this address, while desiring to do and say nothing that shall bear the taint of disrespect, or have an air of dictation, humbly yet firmly claim their right to be heard on a matter so deeply interesting to themselves before any decided action is taken; and they approach the subject in the confident belief that you and your Honorable Colleagues, actuated by zealous considerations for the interests you guard, will not move in a matter that affects the feelings of a large body of men, and concerns the expenditure of a considerable sum of public money, without being quite satisfied that what you determine to do will be at once acceptable and beneficial to the Defence Force, and satisfactory to the country.

It does not become us to do more than speak for ourselves, though we know that many hundreds who have no direct claim to be heard agree with us; and we pledge our signatures to our sincerity when we tell you that if you deprive us of Colonel St. Hill's services, you will strike a serious blow at the Defence Force generally, and imperil the very existence of the Rifle Regiment as at present constituted. We desire to impress upon you, clearly and unmistakably, that, in speaking of Colonel St. Hill we are utterly uninfluenced by any side considerations: we are dealing with him as our Commandant only; as the Commanding Officer who has been identified with the Defence movement from its inception; as the officer who has been told by Colonels Scratchley and Anderson, in presence of his men, that the Force he organised and disciplined is equal in efficiency to any Volunteer Regiment that he had ever reviewed; and as a gentleman who met with little favour from us at the outset, but who has succeeded in securing our confidence and winning our warm personal regard. We respectfully remind you that Colonel Anderson officially reported that our Regiment would "compare favourably with Regiments of branches of the Service *other than Volunteer*, possessing far greater advantages as to time for, and means of, instruction;" and that Colonel Scratchley's last report refers to Colonel St. Hill as an officer "not to be easily replaced."

We have sought to express ourselves in simple yet profoundly respectful language, and we conclude by humbly soliciting you not to disturb arrangements which are eminently satisfactory to the non-commissioned officers and privates of the Tasmanian Volunteer Rifle Regiment.

We are, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servants.

[*Here follow 180 Signatures.*]

NOTE.—The list represents the active strength of the Regiment. Remainder on leave, or temporarily absent. Two parades. 180 all told.

J. R. BETTS, *Lt. and Adjt.*