

(No. 38.)



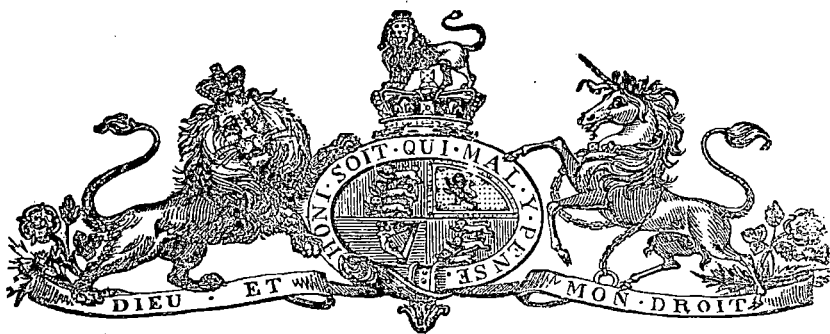
1884.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

HOSPITAL FOR INSANE, NEW NORFOLK :

**REPORT ON, BY DOCTORS MANNING, DICK, AND
PATERSON.**

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



*REPORT upon the Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk, by Doctors MANNING,
DICK, and PATERSON.*

Chief Secretary's Office, Hobart, 11th January, 1884.

GENTLEMEN,

THE great importance which attaches to the subject of the care and treatment of the Insane, has induced the Government to seek the benefit of your experience and advice upon the various questions which press for consideration in connection with the Institution maintained for this object at New Norfolk.

I have the honor, therefore, on behalf of the Government of Tasmania, to request that you will be good enough to examine into and report upon the mental condition of certain persons, referred to by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council as being sane and improperly detained in the Hospital for the Insane, New Norfolk :

To enquire into and report on the general management and working of that Institution as at present constituted, and to suggest any amendments that may appear to you desirable in the existing Legislation as to the Insane, or as to the control and general management of the Hospital :

To report upon the present site of the Institution, and its suitability as the permanent Institution for the treatment of the Insane for the entire Colony, and whether it is desirable to retain such site and purchase additional land, as recommended by the Report of the Royal Commission, or whether the site at New Town, as recommended in the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, is preferable ; or, if neither of these localities approve themselves to your judgment, to recommend a new site, indicating the locality so far as practicable, and in any case to make recommendations as to the character and extent of the buildings, grounds, &c. necessary to secure all the advantages of the modern treatment of the Insane ; and generally to favour the Government with your views upon any other matters in connection with the Institution, or the welfare of the inmates, which may appear to you to be desirable or necessary.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

WM. MOORE.

F. NORTON MANNING, *Esquire, M.D.*

A. S. PATERSON, *Esquire, M.D.*

T. T. DICK, *Esquire, M.D.*

Hobart, 21st January, 1884.

SIR,

IN accordance with instructions contained in your letter of the 11th instant, we have the honor to report,—

1st. That we have carefully examined into the mental condition of certain persons referred to by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council as being sane and improperly detained in the Hospital for the Insane at New Norfolk.

It appears by reference to page 6, paragraph 3, of the Report of the Select Committee, that these persons were 20 in number, and from a careful examination of the evidence and of a letter addressed to the Chief Secretary by the Chairman under date November 23, 1883, we have made a list of these patients, eleven of whom are males, and nine females. Their initials are appended.

Males.

J. R.
A. R.
D. H.
G. B.
J. M.
J. or H. C.
H. M.
W. A. R.
J. C.
J. S.
J. or F. H.

Females.

Miss G. J. C.
M. J. T.
M. McA.
E. H.
A. C.
M. Mc.
Miss A. R. O.
Mrs. J. E. L.
Mrs. A. F.

Of these, we found that J. R. had been discharged to the care of his wife on November 24, and that A. R. had been absent from the Hospital on trial since December 4. The remainder we found to be still in the Hospital, and all are, in our opinion, insane and unfit to be at large. Their discharge could only result in danger to themselves or to the public, and with two or three exceptions, they are suffering from chronic insanity of an incurable character.

2nd. That in commencing an enquiry into the general management and working of the Institution, we were confronted by the unsuitable character of the buildings and the unfitness of a considerable proportion of the staff of Attendants and Nurses for the care of insane persons, and to these causes we are compelled to attribute most of the short-comings which have attracted public attention.

In the first place, the buildings do not allow of the proper classification of the inmates; and owing to the exposed position of the airing courts, which are overlooked from the main road, it is often necessary to relegate all the more noisy and demonstrative patients to the back division, the airing court of which is hemmed in by walls, the buildings of a most gloomy character, and the whole surroundings antagonistic to mental restoration.

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

We gather from our enquiries that the necessary changes of bed linen and other clothes cannot be given to the whole of the patients owing to the defective arrangements for washing.

A large part of the accommodation for patients, including the old cells, is dark, comfortless, and quite unfit for the curative treatment of insane persons. The bath-rooms and lavatories are so defective and ill found that it is difficult to secure the personal cleanliness of the patients, and the absence of proper ward-stores and pantries leads to untidiness and renders the proper management of the Institution difficult, if not impossible. In many parts the buildings are in a bad condition of repair, and this, as well as the want of fittings and of appliances for serving meals, &c., induces us to think that an unwise parsimony has for some time been exercised in the control of the Institution.

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

The staff of Attendants and Nurses is ample in number, and would perhaps be unnecessarily large with better arranged buildings and more convenient appliances; but we consider the members, with certain exceptions, as ill-fitted, by either bodily or other qualifications, for dealing with insane patients. Some are in bad health, others old and infirm, and many of them are drawn from a class

whose services would not be accepted in the neighbouring Colonies for the discharge of such responsible duties. At the time of our visit there were three vacancies owing to the Medical Superintendent being unable to obtain help of any kind, and we found that one man upwards of 60 years of age had been recently engaged in the absence of eligible persons. On an examination of the Staff Register we found that fully half of the attendants and nurses had been appointed in 1883, and had therefore less than one year's service; and among the whole staff there were few whose tenure of office had enabled them to gain the necessary experience for the successful carrying out of their duties. We may here remark that the Medical Superintendent informed us that he is frequently obliged to overlook breaches of discipline which should lead to the dismissal of Attendants, owing to the difficulty of filling the resulting vacancies satisfactorily.

We attribute this undesirable condition of the staff to the low rate of wages, to the want of separated rooms for the attendants,—the present arrangements being that they sleep in the rooms with the patients, and are therefore practically on duty night and day,—to the small amount of leave granted, and to the general disregard of their comforts; and we recommend that the rate of wages on entering the service, especially for male attendants, should be materially increased, and that an annual or periodical increase according to length of service should be granted; that separate dormitory accommodation should be provided; and that the amount of leave should be extended, so that the married men may have an opportunity of spending more time with their families, and all obtain the recreation and change so evidently necessary when the nature of their duties is considered. Whilst we are on this head we desire to put on record our opinion (a) That the present nomenclature of the subordinate members of the staff is objectionable; that the term Chief Attendant might with advantage be substituted for Senior Keeper, Attendant-in-Charge for Underkeeper, and Attendant and Nurse for Wardsman and Wardswoman. (b) That the present system of engaging Attendants and Nurses for a year, and renewing their engagements annually, is open to objection. We consider that all engagements should be made on probation for a period of three months, and that at the termination of probationary service the engagement should be considered as permanent, and voidable only by misconduct or inefficiency. (c) That it is not, as a rule, advisable to engage Attendants or Nurses over 30 years of age.

We do not feel that it comes within the scope of our instructions to recommend any changes in the *personnel* of the staff, especially as several of the offices have only recently been filled; but in view of any changes seeming desirable to the Government in the future, we think it advisable to state that in our experience the selection of officers in England for the service of the Lunacy Departments in the Australian Colonies has been, in the few instances in which it has been tried, by no means an unmixed success; and to express an opinion that any Attendant or Nurse selected and sent from England are not likely to retain their appointments under the existing condition of matters at the Hospital as regards pay, quarters, &c. If liberal salaries are offered, and the necessary consideration shown for their comfort, there will, in all probability, be no difficulty in securing the services of trained Officers and Attendants from the neighbouring Colonies when required.

We have not deemed it advisable to make any detailed enquiry into the charges of cruelty and ill-treatment of patients. The enquiry would necessarily have been very lengthy, and certainly of an unsatisfactory nature, because the charges refer to occurrences a large part of which are stated to have happened some months ago, and in our experience it is as a rule useless to expect accurate testimony from patients in regard to any but very recent events, since the occurrences are likely to be exaggerated by delusions or the remembrance obscured by forgetfulness; and because the evidence in support is for the most part that of dismissed or dissatisfied attendants, which we regard as very unreliable. We have, however, separately and together, visited all the wards both with and without the officers in charge. We have conversed with many of the patients, and in our visits—which were leisurely made—gave all an opportunity of speaking to us; and although the object of our visits was understood, we heard no complaints except such as were obviously due to delusion or exaggeration, whilst the general appearance of the patients and their bearing towards the Attendants conveyed to us an assurance that cruelty or coercion carried to ill-usage were exceptional. Our enquiries convinced us that whenever reports of ill-usage have been made to the Medical Superintendent they have been enquired into and properly dealt with, punishment being meted out to the attendant in fault.

We have carefully considered the use of kerosene for the destruction of vermin, and though we have no personal experience of its employment for this purpose, we are unable to see that its application under certain circumstances would be attended with either suffering or injury to the patient. The destruction of vermin in patients of this class is always a matter of great difficulty. The use of mercurials is not unattended by danger, and any objections to kerosene are equally applicable to carbolic preparations which are used for this purpose in Hospitals in Scotland and elsewhere.

In reference to the charges of neglect as detailed at pages 22, 25, and 26 of the evidence taken by the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, we came to the conclusion that the explanation offered us by Dr. Macfarlane was satisfactory, and that the delay which occurred in attending to the immediate needs of the patients arose from the circumstance that the junior Medical Officer does

not reside in the Institution, his house being at some distance, and that in one instance the Medical Superintendent was unavoidably absent at a time when there was no Assistant Medical Officer, a vacancy having occurred in that office.

We are very strongly of opinion that quarters for the Assistant Medical Officer should be provided within the precincts of the Hospital, and that the Chief Attendant or Senior Keeper should also be a resident officer.

Regulations for the guidance of Officers and Attendants have been framed, but it is quite clear that they have not been issued to Attendants and Nurses for some years past. They are dated 1856, appear to have been last printed in 1864, and are not in accordance with the present requirements of the Hospital. We have ascertained that Dr. Macfarlane has been engaged for some months past in drafting new Rules and Regulations, and when these have received authoritative sanction, every member of the staff should receive a copy of those intended for his special guidance. Separate rules for the bathing of the patients should be framed and a copy of these placed in every bath-room in a conspicuous position.

During our inspection of the Hospital we visited the stores and carefully examined the various articles of provision supplied for the patients and staff. We found all to be fairly good, and the majority of excellent quality. By enquiries made of the storekeeper, cook, baker, and other employes we ascertained that the articles shown to us were quite as good as, and fairly representative of those generally supplied, and that in case of any default in the quality of any article, steps were at once taken by the Medical-Superintendent to secure a supply in accordance with the conditions of contract. The only articles in the quality of which we would suggest improvement are the tea and sugar.

We saw the patients at dinner on two days, when the food was of good quality and well cooked. The mode in which it was served was, however, far from satisfactory; but we understand from the Medical-Superintendent that an improvement in this has been under his consideration for some time, and that new dinner service and utensils, with knives, forks, and all necessary appliances have been for some time under order from England.

The dietary of the patients might, with advantage, be reconsidered. The quantity of meat and vegetables in the scale is only half that authorised for the patients at the Cascades, and seems to us small. Oat or maize-meal, with milk, treacle or sugar, might at small cost be added to the breakfast, especially in winter, and butter should form part of the dietary for both patients and attendants. We notice that the Commissioners, under date February 1, 1881, and the Royal Commission in their Report, have recommended some modifications in the dietary so as to allow of greater variety, and we are in complete agreement with these recommendations.

We would also express our concurrence in recommendations 4 and 24 in the Report of the Royal Commission, pages 14 and 15,—the absence of gardens and flowers and the small provision made for the amusement of the patients having engaged our attention.

Before concluding this part of our Report, we may remark that we have examined very closely into the general working of the Institution, and inspected the records, and whilst there is much at the New Norfolk Asylum which is to our minds unsatisfactory, owing mainly to causes which we have already sufficiently indicated, we are unable to endorse the charges of neglect or the general charges of mismanagement which have been advanced.

On calling for a return of the criminal patients we found that the list included 20 names—16 males and 4 females; but on examining the return it appeared that the majority had long since completed the sentences which they were serving when admitted, and that they were no longer in any sense under criminal liability. Some of the sentences were originally for short periods, and inflicted for comparatively venial offences.

The number who appear to be still liable to be classed as criminal lunatics is 8 only, and of these 2 females and 4 males have been found insane by jury, either on arraignment or on trial, and are classified as Queen's pleasure patients, and the other 2 (both males) are serving sentence. As the number is so small we do not feel called on to make any special recommendations as regards their removal to the Cascades or otherwise, beyond indicating our opinion that the cases might be dealt with on special considerations, affecting the individuals rather than as a body, and that it would be inadvisable to transfer those of the Queen's pleasure patients who, by former position and education might be wronged by the association, unless there are some means of classification and of separating them from the present inmates.

We learn that when criminal lunatics are forwarded to New Norfolk the only document sent with them is the Governor's Warrant; and we would recommend that, in future, copies of the medical certificates, and a statement showing their status, crime, and when under sentence, its duration, should be sent with them, and that at the expiry of sentence they should, by departmental arrangement, if not by statute, be removed from the criminal list.

In considering the general management of the Institution our attention has necessarily been directed to the position of the Commissioners, which has no analogy in any other Colony with which we have acquaintance. The Commissioners are, under the Act 22 Vict. No. 23, charged with the control, direction, and management of the Hospital, but have no powers to carry out improvements and alterations to the buildings, or even to execute the necessary repairs, and, as appears from their Reports for the years 1877, 1878, 1879, 1881, and 1882, their recommendations with regard to the buildings, and also as to the wages of the staff and other matters, have not received immediate attention or been approved by the Government.

The management of the Hospital by Commissioners would no doubt be successful if the Government was prepared to hand over to them sufficient appropriations for the maintenance of the Hospital, and for the necessary repairs and additions to buildings,—to place in their hands the appointment and dismissal of all officers, including the medical superintendent,—and to give them the general powers accorded to the managers of Hospitals for the Insane in most of the States of the American Union; but, under the present arrangement, there is a divided authority and responsibility which cannot be conducive to the welfare of the institution. We are of opinion that if the Hospital is to continue under the immediate control of the Government the medical superintendent should be directly responsible to the Chief Secretary alone.

With a view to this we recommend fresh legislation, to include the appointment of Official Visitors to replace the Commissioners, such Visitors—not more than 5 in number, of whom 2 should be medical practitioners—to be charged with the inspection of the Hospital in accordance with the practice obtaining in the neighbouring Colonies. We do not think the appointment of a Special Inspector of Asylums necessary or advisable at present. All the duties of inspection can be carried out by the Official Visitors.

The provisions of the present Lunacy Act as regards the admission and discharge of patients are in the main satisfactory; but we consider that it might with advantage be amended in several minor particulars, and especially with reference to criminal patients. If it is found desirable to recast existing legislation, the Lunacy Acts of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, as well as the Bill which has for some Sessions been before the Queensland Parliament and postponed owing to the pressure of business, might with advantage be consulted. The provisions relating to insane criminals in the New South Wales Act of 1878, and the amendments to it since passed, are very complete, and might with some modifications be adopted in Tasmania.

3rd. In considering the future site of the Main Hospital for the treatment of the Insane, we thought it advisable first to visit the Institution for Invalids at New Town, and we had no difficulty in deciding that it is not suited for the purpose. The amount of land exclusive of the Government Farm—which, owing to its distance and to the fact that a large amount of private property intervenes between it and the grounds belonging to the Invalid Institution, is practically not available—is too small to afford profitable occupation for the inmates, and is so situated that a large part of it is overlooked from the adjoining properties, and it would therefore be impossible, without high walls or fences which would shut out all view, to secure to the more excited among the inmates the privacy and freedom from public observation which are absolutely essential. The estate is already almost surrounded by houses, many situated at no great distance, and is, in fact, in a growing suburb. The buildings, admirably suited as they are for the purpose for which they are now used, could not, owing to the want of single rooms and other special accommodation, be adapted for the use of insane persons without a large expenditure of money, which in the end would not secure results commensurate with the outlay.

The choice, therefore, rests between that of the present Hospital at New Norfolk and a new site in some other locality.

After anxious consideration we have decided that the latter is in all respects preferable. The main reasons which have influenced us in arriving at this decision are (1) that the present site at New Norfolk is too far removed from Hobart—the centre of population—and even on the completion of the railway now authorised by Parliament will involve a long journey by the friends of patients and by official visitors, and, what we regard as of very great importance, by officers, attendants, and nurses seeking relaxation and change from trying duties in the limited time which can be allowed them for leave of absence. (2) The present buildings are ill arranged, badly placed on the site, whether as regards the amount of land now constituting the estate, or such additional amount as is recommended for purchase in the Report of the Royal Commission. A very large part of them are quite unfit for further occupation, and the remainder need extensive alterations. And, lastly, that even with a large outlay for new buildings and alterations, the Institution can never be made thoroughly satisfactory, or on a level with modern ideas and requirements.

If a new Hospital on a new site be decided on in accordance with our recommendation, we think that accommodation should be provided for 375 patients, so as to suffice for the present number of inmates at New Norfolk (286), the patients at the Cascades (58), and the small additional number which may be expected with increase in the general population, and which, judging from the experience of the last 10 years, is not likely to exceed 4 or 5 per annum.

The accommodation should consist of at least three wards for general patients, and cottages for the paying patients of each sex so as to admit of the necessary classification, a special block or Pavilion for the Imperial patients now at the Cascades and for criminal patients. The patients now at the Cascades can be maintained more cheaply in buildings connected with the main Hospital for the Insane than in a separate establishment with a distinct staff, and as they decrease in numbers the special building for them will serve for the criminal patients, who are likely to increase slowly in number, and for such of the general patients who require special treatment owing to dangerous tendencies. The building should, we are of opinion, be erected in the cheapest possible style consistent with durability, and embody such modern improvements as are considered essential for a well-ordered curative Institution. The space allowed for each patient should not be less than that set forth as a minimum by the English Commissioners in Lunacy in their printed instructions to architects, viz., 600 cubic feet per patient in associated dormitories, 800 cubic feet in single rooms, and 1000 cubic feet in the rooms for the sick and infirm. The number of single rooms should not be less than $\frac{1}{3}$ th of the total accommodation. We do not consider it necessary to do more than lay down general principles on this subject, as all matters of detail must be left to the architect, who should before planning the buildings be afforded the opportunity of seeing the more modern buildings for the insane in the neighbouring Colonies, from which much can be learned as to general structure, arrangement, and details.

In the selection of a new site it will be necessary to secure at least 100 acres; and we regard a larger area as desirable if it can be obtained in one block and in a satisfactory position. Having this in view, we have, as well as in the somewhat limited time at our disposal would permit, taken a general survey of the land in the immediate neighbourhood of, and easily accessible from, Hobart, with the result that we are able to indicate two sites, both at Glenorchy, which fulfil almost all the conditions which we consider necessary. The first, which, we think, is unexceptionable and unequalled as an Asylum site in any place known to us, is situated next to the Race-course, and possesses a large frontage to the Derwent. The area is about 130 acres, and is coloured red in the plan (Appendix C.) The second, coloured green in the plan, which is in some respects less suitable, comprises three paddocks,—one, of about 80 acres, belonging to Mr. Maguire, one between it and the Race-course, marked as the property of Mr. Cobb, which it would be necessary to secure, as it is rising land and overlooks Mr. Maguire's estate, and the third belonging, we understand, to Dr. Butler, which would allow of access to the railway. The three together, so far as we can judge, would form an estate of something over 170 acres.

Both sites possess the advantage of easy access by road, rail, and water facilities for drainage and water supply, level sites for buildings, and land suitable for cultivation. The former, from its position, can never be encroached upon, and the view from it is a remarkably fine one. Feeling that considerations of temporary economy or local circumstances, of which we can have no knowledge, may incline the Government to retain the Hospital at New Norfolk, we have thought it our duty to consider the existing buildings with a view to remodelling them, and to this end we have spent a considerable time, with the assistance of Mr. Eldridge, the Colonial Architect, in preparing block plans of new buildings to afford the additional accommodation required to replace such of the buildings as must be removed, and to provide the necessary rooms, outbuildings, and offices for administration.

We have taken it for granted that the 62 acres of land recommended for purchase by the Royal Commission can be obtained without difficulty and at a moderate cost, and that existing roads in the neighbourhood of the Hospital, especially Burnett and Humphry streets, with the cross streets joining these, can be closed as shewn in the general Plan marked A in the Appendix to this Report. In the absence of these conditions the remodelling of the Hospital appears to us impracticable, and should, we think, not under any circumstances be attempted. A block plan marked B, showing the proposed alterations, is appended, and we have sketched out with the Colonial Architect the general arrangement and the rooms and other accommodation necessary in the different wards and buildings; but, as we have indicated when recommending a new Hospital, a study of details may profitably be made in the neighbouring Colonies.

The following Return shows in detail the accommodation which will be provided in the Hospital after the alterations are made, and distinguishes such of the existing accommodation as will be retained:—

OLD BUILDINGS—		Male.	Female.	Total.
(1.) Ward for recent cases...	{ Associated rooms.....	..	35	
	{ Single rooms (now occupied by males).....	..	12	
(2.) Ward for convalescent, quiet, and sick	60	
(3.) Ward for refractory	{ Associated rooms.....	..	20	
	{ Single rooms	12	
Cottage for ladies	13	
(1.) Ward for sick and infirm		44		
Cottage for gentlemen		17		

NEW BUILDINGS—		Male.	Female.	Total.
(2.) Ward for recent cases....	{ Associated rooms.....	33		
	{ Single rooms.....	12		
(3.) Ward for convalescent and quiet	{ Associated rooms.....	33		
	{ Single rooms.....	12		
Separate single rooms.....		12		
Special Ward for Cascade patients and criminals..	{ Associated rooms.....	40		
	{ Single rooms.....	20		
		<u>223</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>375</u>
Present number of patients {		New Norfolk 148	142 }	348
		Cascades 58	.. }	

The proportion of single rooms for male patients is 1 in 4.
Ditto for female patients is 1 in 6.

It will be seen that the whole of the present quarters for women, which are in many respects imperfect,—the ward for refractory patients being very ill-planned and gloomy, and some of the other buildings far from what is desirable,—are under this arrangement retained, as they are strongly built, and with some alterations may be made serviceable. Medical Officer's Quarters and Visiting Rooms are provided in one of the buildings, and quarters for the Chief Attendant and for the Gate-keeper at the entrance gates. The alterations include dining-rooms for Attendants and Nurses, and dormitories for these have been planned in the new, and should be provided in the old buildings. The bath-rooms in the old buildings require complete refitting, and some of them must be enlarged; and very extensive repairs are necessary in various situations.

The new buildings planned include laundry, kitchen, workshops, stores, and a general assembly room. Hot and cold water service has been considered for the laundry, kitchen, and bath-rooms. New fencing is provided to separate the airing-courts, and to surround the additional land and the recreation grounds.

With a view to economy, it is proposed that the assembly-room and workshops and laundry, so far as is practicable, should be built of weather-board; but even with this, the estimate, made by Mr. Eldridge in careful consultation with us, of the total cost of the additions and alterations amounts to between £30,000 and £35,000.

We have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

F. NORTON MANNING, *M.D.*

T. T. DICK, *M.D.*


ALEX. S. PATERSON, *M.D.*

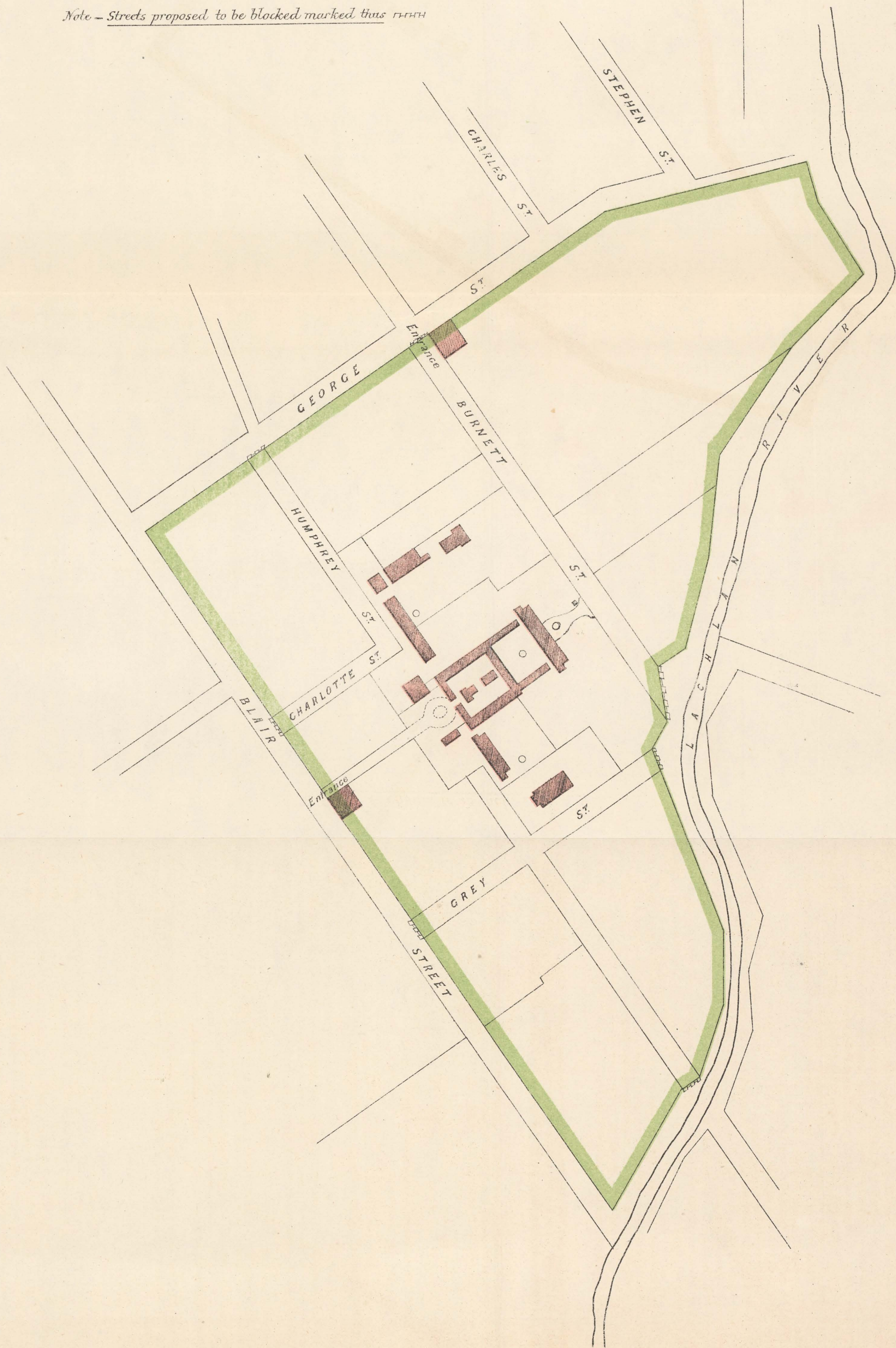
The Hon. the Chief Secretary.

NEW NORFOLK ASYLUM

Scale 4 chains to an inch

— A —

Note — Streets proposed to be blocked marked thus 



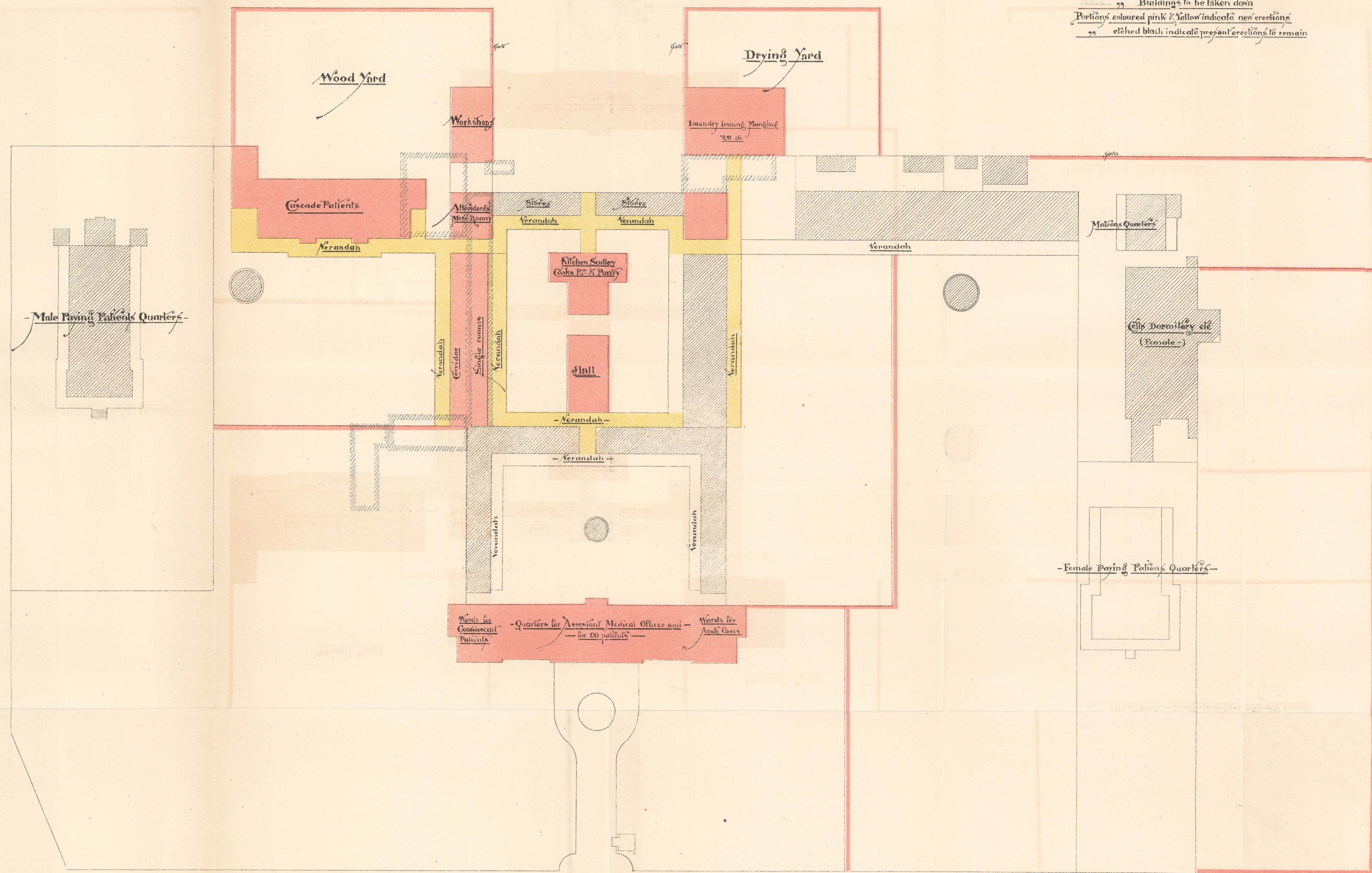
— NEW NORFOLK ASYLUM —

— Plan showing proposed Alterations & Additions —

—B—

—Reference—

- indicates new fencing and walls
- Buildings to be taken down
- Portions coloured pink & yellow indicate new erections
- etched black indicate present erections to remain



SCALE 40 feet = 1 inch



M. W. Edridge
Architect 21.1.84

APPENDIX . C .

Scale 10 Chains to an Inch

