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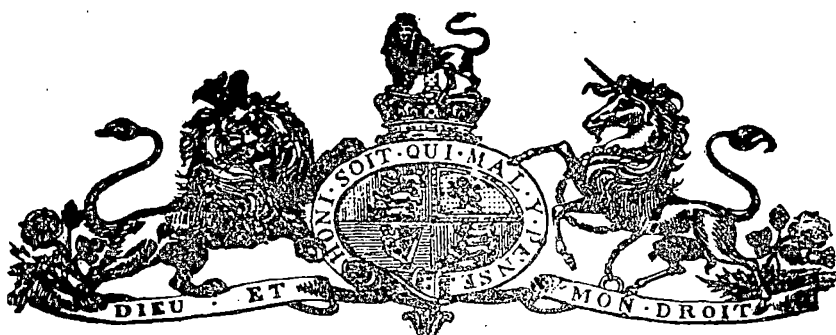
1889.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

SANITARY CONDITION OF WELDBOROUGH:

REPORT OF THE ENGINEERING INSPECTOR OF THE
CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

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



REPORT ON THE SANITARY CONDITION OF WELDBOROUGH.

To the Honourable the President and Members of the Central Board of Health.

GENTLEMEN.

I HAVE the honour to report to you the results of a recent inspection of the Town of Weldborough. I had the pleasure of meeting the Chairman and other Members of the Local Board of Health, and to them and to the Police Authorities my hearty thanks are due for their courtesy and assistance.

1. Weldborough is situated on Thomas's Plains, a plateau about 1100 feet above the sea. At the time of my visit in September the police estimated the population of the township to be 233, of whom 91 were Chinese. The number of the population, especially of the Chinese, is subject to great fluctuation, and I understand the number of the latter has been known to be many times greater than it is now.

2. The houses of the Europeans are scattered over a comparatively large area. The sanitary features are the want of drainage and of paved yards and footways round the houses. The public-school was crowded, and the privy accommodation out of repair. The police quarters were also in need of repair. The only bakehouse on the township was not in clean condition. The slaughter-house was in a very unsatisfactory state, but was going to be removed to a better position. The cemetery is about a quarter of a mile from the nearest house, and no complaints were made of its condition.

3. The Chinese quarter is built on the reverse slope of the hill to that on which the rest of the town is placed. The ground drains naturally towards a branch of Ferny Creek, a water-race from a higher point of which has been taken along the hillside close to the houses. As usual with the Chinese, the piggeries are placed alongside or over this race so as to facilitate the frequent bathing of the pigs, whose bodies and whose lairs are kept cleaner than those of many of their masters. The houses are huddled close together chiefly on both sides of a main thoroughfare covered with slabs. Some of the houses have drains running partly underground, but most of the drainage is allowed to flow over the surface and to lodge under the slabs of the roadways.

4. The accompanying sketch plan and section of a part of the Chinese quarter will give an idea of the general arrangement. The houses are all built of wood, with stone and brick fire-places and chimneys. The walls of most are covered with split palings, but many of the older houses have log walls—often of tree-ferns. Except the shops, the houses chiefly consist of small congeries of chambers fitted with bunks, and with scarcely any light or means of ventilation, and in which in busy times no doubt great numbers of human beings are packed. I should have no hesitation in condemning some of these places as unfit for human habitation.

5. The prevailing sanitary idea among the Chinese seems to be to get rid simply of the obtrusive appearance of dirt, no matter how. Consequently, so long as the slops and refuse can be thrown out of the house it is no matter that they flow from the higher houses under the lower and lodge below and between the joints of the slab roadways; and a hole through the cook-house wall is a

satisfactory way of getting rid of blood, offal, and kitchen dirt, though the narrow spaces between the houses be thereby turned into noisome gutters. Only in the one place marked on plan did I notice a cesspit for collecting liquid manure for garden purposes, and that is so placed as to certainly affect the soil under the neighbouring house.

Regulation of
Chinese
quarter.

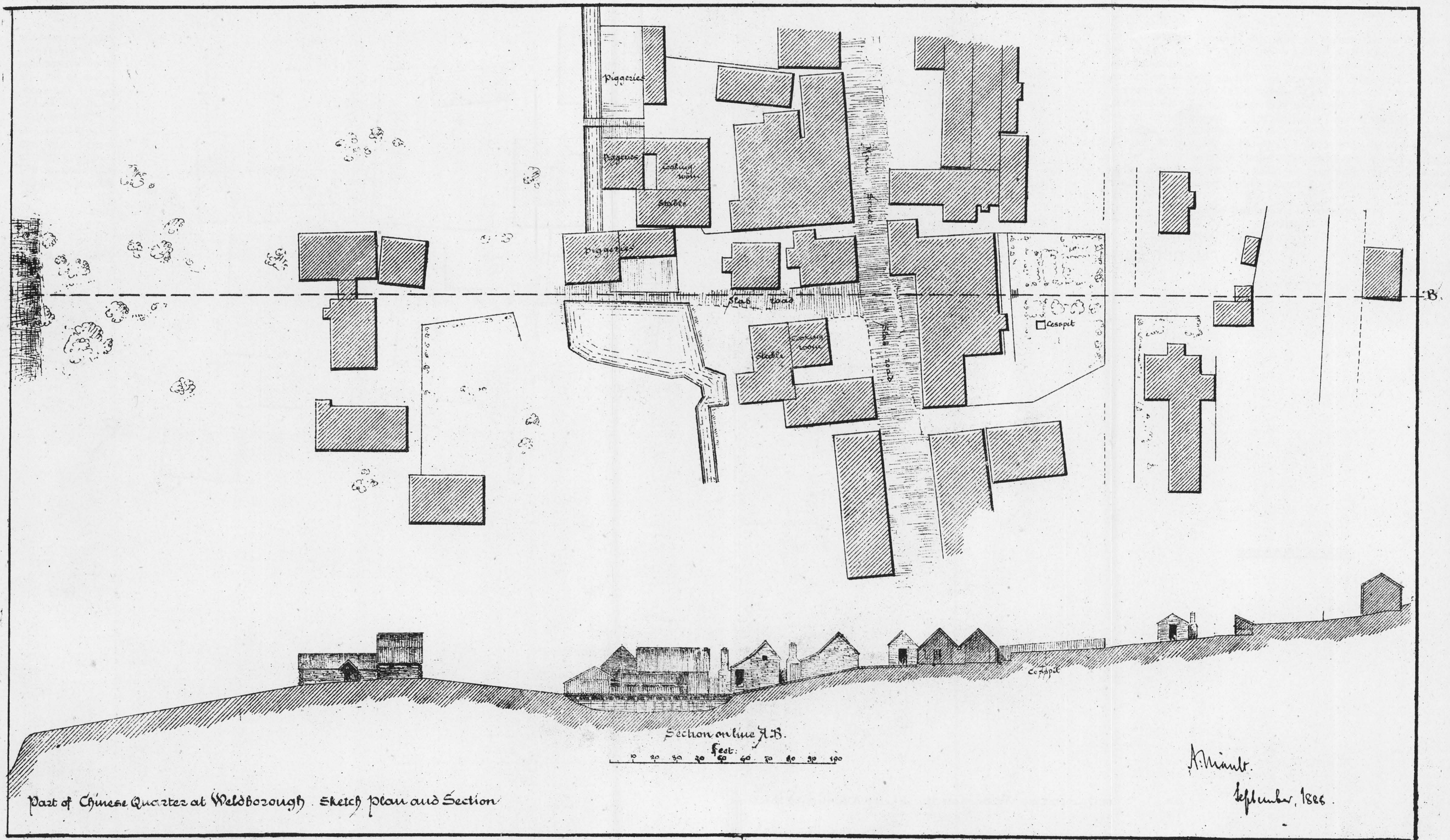
6. I believe all this Chinese quarter is built on "miners' rights:" so I beg to repeat the suggestions I have made respecting Regulations under the "Mineral Lands Act" in my recent Report upon the Fingal District. Speaking generally, I would recommend that no exceptional action be taken in regard to such useful colonists as the Chinese have proved themselves to be; on the contrary, I believe the true solution of the Chinese difficulty is to treat them exactly the same as the rest of the population. Thus, in regard to sanitary matters, let the provisions of the Public Health Acts in regard to nuisances generally—in regard to the closing as unfit for habitation of many of the old, damp, fern tree log-huts, in regard to overcrowding and all such like matters—be strictly and patiently enforced in the case of the Chinese as in the case of Englishmen. This can easily be done while the numbers of the former are relatively small; and, with similar action in connexion with the Police Act, will either have the effect of checking inordinate immigration, or will remove the greater objections to immigration if it take place, and make the continuance of control easy.

I have the honour to remain,
Gentlemen;

Your faithful Servant,

A. MAULT, *Engineering Inspector*:

Hobart, 20th December, 1888.



Part of Chinese Quarter at Walsborough. Sketch plan and Section

A. M. M. M.
September, 1886.