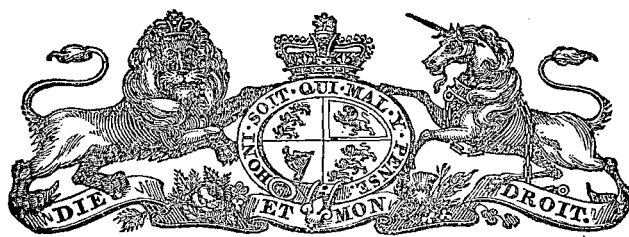


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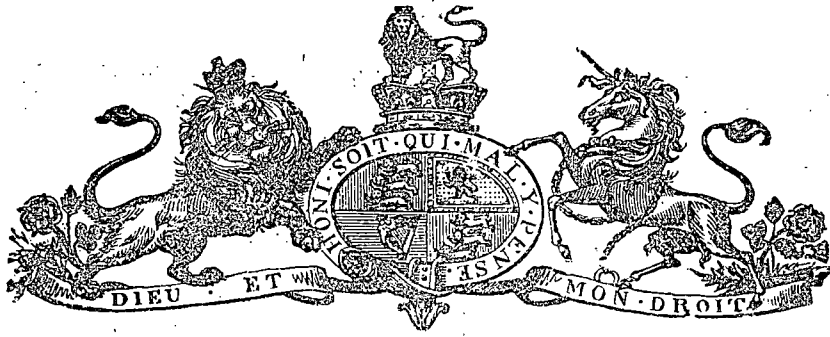
T A S M A N I A.

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

GAOL BUILDINGS, CASCADES.

MR. HENRY HUNTER'S REPORT.

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands and Works, and ordered by the House to be printed, September 15, 1876.



Hobart Town, 12th September, 1876.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit for your information the following report of the works in progress at the Gaol buildings, Cascades, under the Contract held by Mr. E. G. Ford, (dated 19th April, 1876), which have been placed by you under my charge and supervision.

I presume I am not called upon to express any opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the site for the erection and establishment of what is to be, I believe, a permanent Gaol. I may remark, however, that in my desire to see the quality of the concrete, &c. that has been put under the foundation walls, I endeavoured to sink holes in several places, but failed on account of water rushing in when only about two feet below the surface. The ground seems to be a complete bog, and great additional expense must necessarily be incurred upon a proper and efficient system of drainage.

I conclude that, as a matter of course, a plan of the entire prison buildings has been made and finally determined upon, and that the portion now in course of construction is an instalment of that plan.

The accommodation comprised in the buildings in progress consists of two rows of cells (part of the original buildings), eighty in number. These, together with two of the yards,—one 166 feet by 45 feet, the other 166 feet by 30 feet,—are to be entirely enclosed and roofed over. They are to be lighted by "lanterns" constructed in the roofs. The larger apartment is to be a mess-room, the other a "workshop." The cells are entered directly from these two enclosures, from which also they are to obtain their only supply of light and air. A kitchen is to be built in one of the adjoining yards, to make room for which a portion of the old buildings is now being pulled down. In another corner a bath-room is shown to be formed, partly out of some of the old 'quarters.'

It does not appear to me that much consideration, if any, has been given to sanitary arrangements, or the providing of proper and indispensable conveniences.

Three cells out of the eighty are described to be set aside for closets, two with direct access only from the mess-room, and one in like manner from the workshop. No provision is made in these for drainage or for fittings; and if it be intended to use earth closets, the soil-boxes must be carried through the entire length of the mess-room or shop to the front of the buildings.

No urinal accommodation whatever is provided, neither is there drainage from the bath-room, nor any lavatory fittings or such like necessaries.

The plans and specification under which the present contract is being carried out are loosely and vaguely drawn up, particularly as regards certain large items of materials, which, it appears, are being, or are to be, supplied by the Government.

A large quantity of bricks have been brought up from Port Arthur, under a requisition dated 30 May, 1876. About 50,000 I believe are now upon the works, and they are of such a wretched and worthless description that I cannot consent to their being used for any building purpose. I am not aware of the circumstances which led to these bricks being procured, but I think when the first lot was received attention ought to have been drawn, if it was not, to their bad quality and unfitness for use. Instead, however, the quantity above stated has been supplied; and in addition to the cost of procuring there is the transit from Port Arthur, and cartage from the wharf, all of which will be found to be extra charges upon this contract.

In a Memorandum forwarded by the department to the Minister of Lands with the tenders on the 11th April, it is stated, that "in addition to the amount of tender (£5350) there will be the cost of timber, glass, and iron, ordered by the Department, which will be about £500;" and a further sum of £150 is set down as the amount to be probably required "for extras and contingencies." No reference is then made to the supply of bricks. The timber, glass, and iron are stated to be already in store, and I estimate their cost to have been upwards of £700.

The further supply of the bricks referred to should be at once discontinued, and in lieu of them I would suggest that stone should be used from the Government Quarries close to the buildings, as specified for other portions. The brickwork is to be built in cement, and plastered with the same material. This is quite unnecessary, and the substitution of stone-work in good mortar will not be, I believe, any more expensive.

As regards the work already performed when I took charge (4th September), it being all underground, or rather under water, I have not been able to examine it so carefully as I could wish, and should otherwise have done. I do not, however, hesitate to express my positive opinion that it is far more than sufficient to answer its purpose, and that great and unnecessary extravagance has been permitted in the performance of it. I know not upon whom this responsibility rests, but I feel bound to draw attention to the fact.

The whole consists of four large brick half-circular drains, eight sleeper walls to support floor joists, and a portion of the foundation for the north-west boundary wall.

The drains are cemented inside, and all lead into one 18-inch pipe drain, which is carried on to the creek running past the front of the buildings. Through these drains it is also intended to supply *fresh air* to the large covered enclosures.

Under the drains and sleeper walls concrete has been put in, varying in width from 6ft. to 3ft. 6in., and from 4ft. 6in. to 3ft. 6in. in depth, which, with the excavation necessary for the same, I find will cost at the schedule price attached to the contract (15s. per yard not including excavation) £922 16s., and which is entirely an extra upon the contract amount. I consider this might have been saved, except under the boundary walls (where I have found it necessary to put in still more); certainly under the sleepers and drains. Four or six-inch drain pipes to carry away the roof water would have sufficed, and in my judgment would have been far preferable. I would certainly adopt other means for the supply of air to the buildings.

I attach hereto a statement of my valuation of work done, and also of materials on the ground supplied by the contractor up to time of my taking charge. In consequence of my inability to get down to the bottom of trenches and judge for myself, I have based my calculations upon information supplied by Overseer Moore, who was until then on the works during the whole time, and who, it appears, took all measurements for the purpose of regulating the payments of the contractor to a sub-contractor, who is carrying on the masons' work, &c. I arrive at the amount of extras by measuring on the drawings what is included in the contract, and deducting that from the total. My valuation is corroborated by a memorandum which the contractor (Mr. Ford) has since placed in my hands, showing his account and value, which very nearly agree with my own.

The report of Mr. Cheverton (dated 30 August) upon the works, with an appended list of quantity and value of work performed to that date, does not agree with my valuation nor with that of the contractor. He (Mr. Cheverton) estimates the total amount for work and materials at £1725 14s. 6d., of which sum £1110 8s. is for extra work on schedule prices. Mr. Cheverton however, subsequently, in a letter dated 4th Sept., which you, Sir, forwarded for my information, states that he made only a hurried report, and "did not go so thoroughly into the matter as he should have had it been a final settlement;" and that in consequence some errors had been brought under his notice.

The contractor has applied for a further instalment of £600. According to the annexed valuation he is only entitled, in accordance with the conditions of contract, to a sum of about £500,—having previously to my taking charge received one payment of £600; and this includes an allowance for the materials on the works supplied by the contractor. I cannot dispute the claim to this sum, as I presume the work was performed under duly authorised supervision, and must be accordingly paid for. But I feel bound to repeat my opinion that very much of the expenditure has been, so far, wasteful, unnecessary, and useless.

From my observations upon the works, it will be seen that further sums will have to be provided. I believe that the completion of the buildings now in course of construction will cost, including the contract amount, materials, &c. provided and to be provided by the Government, not less certainly than £7500.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

HENRY HUNTER.

The Hon. Minister of Lands and Works.

VALUATION of Work performed, Materials supplied, &c. at Gaol Buildings, Cascades, to the 4th September, 1876.

	£	s.	d.
2045 yards excavation, at 2s.	204	10	0
1094 yards concrete, (schedule price), at 15s.....	820	10	0
236 perches rubble walling, (ditto), at 14s.	165	4	0
207 feet run. 18in. drain, laying only, at 2s.....	20	14	0
563 feet run. drains and flues, at 3s. 6d	98	10	6
Pulling down old buildings, say	35	0	0
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	£1344	8	6

Materials on ground supplied by Contractor—

	£	s.	d.
About 25,000 feet hardwood timber, joists, &c., at 9s.....	112	10	0
20 casks cement, at 25s.....	25	0	0
Stone prepared, say.....	15	0	0
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	152	10	0
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	£1496	18	6

Of the above, the following are extra charges upon the Contract—

	£	s.	d.
1023 yards excavation, at 2s.....	102	6	0
1094 yards concrete, at 15s.	820	10	0
207 feet run. 18 in. drain pipe, laying only, at 2s.....	20	14	0
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	£943	10	0

HENRY HUNTER.

Hobart Town, 12th September, 1876.