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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 .

N E W M A P O F T A S M A N I A :

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E .

Return to an Order of the House of Assembly. (Mr. Brown.)

Laid upon the Table by the Minister of Lands, August 24, 1881, and ordered by the House to be printed.



Hobart, 7th May, 1881.

SIR,

THE completion of the draft of the new Map of Tasmania having been delayed, from causes as to which I am not fully informed, but which have probably been unavoidable, far beyond the limit of time originally laid down, I do myself the honor to address you on the subject, in the hope that some arrangement may be made for hastening its publication.

According to the original intention an officer was to have been selected who could give his whole time to the preparation of a first draft of the map under my general direction, and with the professional aid of officers of the Lands Department.

Some of the preliminary work, comprising a great part of the Western Country, was to be entrusted to Mr. C. P. Sprent, and the drafting of the whole map was to be placed in the hands of Mr. Albert Reid, after a final revision and correction, for which I was to be empowered to seek the advice and assistance of some of the more experienced surveyors and other persons well acquainted with particular districts.

The question of the representation of the orographical features, or vertical contour of the Island, was to be deferred to this stage of the business. These, as you are probably well aware, constitute the most unsatisfactory feature of the existing official map. In some districts the filling in of details of this kind appears to have been done with scrupulous exactness; in others the errors are grave and numerous. At the present time it is impossible for any one who is not personally acquainted with the country to know how far any reliance can be placed upon the information laid before him, and the final revision to which I have referred would be a very difficult and laborious work.

The original intention for the preliminary drafting not having been carried out it has had to be done by Mr. Reid, either after office hours or in spare moments of his official time. Over such work I have, of course, no control, nor any right to interfere with it, except by inquiry or suggestion from time to time; nor could I venture to seek your sanction for the execution of the remaining portion of the work until the first draft of the map, or at least one quarter sheet of it, had been officially placed in my hands.

On the 15th October last I received a communication from you to the effect that instructions had been given to furnish me with the draft of each sheet when finished, and that you had requested Mr. Reid to have the work completed with as little delay as possible; but up to the present time I have not been placed in a position to move further in the matter. The time named for execution of the draft having already been exceeded by more than two years it is quite evident that the map cannot now be completed in the form originally contemplated without additional delay, which would utterly defeat the object of its promoters. It will, however, be impossible for me to discuss the question of modifying the scheme until I am enabled to report to you on the work that has been actually completed; and I will ask you to take the matter into your serious consideration, and to adopt such measures as are required to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion without more loss of time.

With regard to that portion of the work which was entrusted to Mr. C. P. Sprent, it is due to him to mention that his draft was sent in early in the month of January of last year, and that he has voluntarily offered to supplement this by furnishing any fresh information that may be obtainable up to the date of the publication of the map.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

The Hon. C. O'REILLY, Minister of Lands.

T. STEPHENS.

WILL MR. Reid be good enough to furnish me with his observations on the references made to him in the letter of Mr. Stephens, 7th May, 1881, forwarded herewith.

C. O'REILLY.
13. 5. 81.

Lands and Works Office, 21st May, 1881.

SIR,

IN obedience to your request, I have the honor to furnish you with the following observations upon Mr. Stephens' letter of the 7th instant respecting the new Map of Tasmania.

Having stated that, according to the original intention of the promoters, an officer of the Department was to have been selected who could give his whole time to the preparation of the first draft of the map, Mr. Stephens proceeds to say that the drafting of the whole map was to be placed in my hands after a final revision and correction, for which he was to be empowered to seek the advice and assistance of some of the more experienced surveyors and other persons well acquainted with particular districts, and further on Mr. Stephens complains that up to the present time he has not been furnished with the draft of any portion of the map by me.

To these remarks I respectfully desire to state that I was not aware of any promise being given that a particular officer should devote the whole of his time to this work: I merely undertook to correct certain portions of the present map during office hours, and to draw the lithographic transfers of the new map after office hours. I endeavoured to do the work of correction during office hours, but found it utterly impossible to accomplish it; the many duties devolving upon me as second draftsman prevented me from doing so. Nearly the whole of the compilation I have done has been performed at home after my official day's work has been completed.

Since your instructions to me in October, I tried to perform what I had undertaken; but the very great amount of work that has had to be got through in the Drafting-room, and the additional burden of the preparation of maps for the Census, the whole of which I had to superintend, and for the correctness of which I was responsible, has delayed me very much in completing the draft of the map.

Mr. Stephens mentions that Mr. Sprent's draft of the western part of the Colony was received in the early part of last year; but I must point out that in many parts it very much disagrees with the map compiled by the late J. R. Scott, especially in the southern part, a locality which I know was personally explored by that gentleman. When Mr. Sprent was in Hobart I mentioned this to him, and also that I was most anxious to have an interview with him and Mr. Stephens in order that this discrepancy might be explained, but I regret to say that, notwithstanding many endeavours on my part to effect a meeting, Mr. Sprent left Hobart, and the opportunity was lost. The draft at this time was in Mr. Stephens' hands and was not returned to me, though I repeatedly applied for it, until too late to consult with Mr. Sprent upon the differences. I have this draft now in my possession, and I could at once commence the necessary transfers for the stone if Mr. Stephens would certify that it has been finally revised, and that he considers it is correct.

The great difficulty to be contended with is the representation of the mountains: Mr. Stephens is desirous that this should be done by contour lines, but I am afraid this is impossible. In the existing Map of the Colony contour lines have not been adopted, neither has Mr. Sprent in his compilation drawn the hills in that manner. If it is insisted upon that the whole of the orographical features should be represented in this manner, it will cause further delay in the publication of the map.

I have reduced from the latest surveys and from Mr. Gould's maps the Counties of Devon, Dorset, and part of Cornwall, comprising the north-eastern part of the Colony, which I shall be happy to place in Mr. Stephens' hands for final revision; there then remains to be corrected the south-eastern portion, in which very little alteration can be made,—the Main Line Railway, with some additional roads and new towns, being about all that can be added.

As Mr. Stephens is anxious that the whole work should be completed as speedily as possible; and as I am also very desirous that that end should be accomplished, I shall be very glad if definite arrangements could be made for that purpose.

I very much regret that when the work was originally proposed I suggested the printing of the sheets of the map on the lithographic press of the office. Ordinary lithographic printing is not good enough for the purpose, and, as far as I can see, the office press will for many months be fully occupied in performing the current work required from it. If not too late I would respectfully urge that the proposal I made last year—to have the map printed by the Photo-lithographic process—should be re-considered and, if possible, adopted.

I have, &c.

ALBERT REID.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.

THE Minister of Lands and Works will feel obliged by Mr. Stephens kindly favouring him with his observations upon Mr. Reid's letter of 21st May, 1881; and, further, with his views as to the best means to expedite the completion of the proposed Map of Tasmania.

C. O'REILLY.
1 June, 1881.

Hobart, 18th July, 1881.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your minute of the 1st ultimo, with Mr. Reid's letter of the 21st May. My reply has been deferred on account of your late serious illness, and the consequent pressure of more urgent business which I knew would demand your whole attention.

The Ministerial changes which occurred soon after the scheme for a new Map of Tasmania was first broached prevented the settlement of many details of the arrangements for its preparation; and as no provision had been formally made for the appointment of a separate officer to prepare the first rough draft, it is not surprising that some misconception has arisen on the subject. I am sure that I have never made any remark which could be construed into a complaint of any remissness on Mr. Reid's part. It was never expected that he would be able to give more than occasional assistance in the compilation of the first draft; but this was to be made complete in every respect, before the final transfer for the stone should be commenced. The circumstances detailed in his letter show clearly that the preliminary drafting cannot and will not be done in spare moments.

Mr. Reid has quite misunderstood my suggestion about "contour lines." These, as will be seen from my Memo. of the 1st December, 1878, were to be shown only on the rough draft, and were to serve as a guide in determining the shading of hills and mountains when the final transfer was being made.

As regards the Western Country, it is almost unnecessary to say that for that part of it with which Mr. C. P. Sprent is personally acquainted he is by far the best authority. But he himself styles his draft a "rough map;" and there is a good deal of work still to be done in these two sheets before the final transfer can be begun. I am inclined to think that the extent of the corrections required in the S.E. sheet is much underrated by Mr. Reid; but I have purposely refrained from directing attention to other portions of the Map until the draft of the first sheet shall have been finished.

This, the N.E. sheet, comprising the County of Dorset and parts of the Counties of Devon, Westmorland, and Somerset, has been shown to me by Mr. Reid. Corrections of the delineation of the river system, and reductions from recent surveys, have occupied the chief part of the draftsman's time, and as this is strictly professional work I need not remark upon it. The rest of the work in this sheet is not sufficiently advanced to enable me to form any opinion as to the time which will be occupied in completing it. I have made some corrections in the old map, and have noted other points which require to be carefully considered.

Looking at the length of time that has elapsed since the first inception of this undertaking, and the urgent and daily increasing want of an official Map of Tasmania, I am obliged to admit that the attempt to properly represent the details of the mountain system must be abandoned for the present. This, at best, can be only a provisional Map, and very different arrangements will have to be made before the task of reconciling the discrepancies between the county maps and the trigonometrical survey can be undertaken; but as such a work is quite outside the scope of this correspondence, I will only now say that, if it be long delayed, inextricable confusion will be the probable if not certain result.

I am well aware, from what has passed at our numerous interviews, that you are personally desirous of forwarding this business, and I trust that you will be enabled to make immediate arrangements for the engagement of a qualified officer to complete the rough drafts. The cost of the whole affair will be a mere nothing compared with its importance, and will probably be more than covered by the sale of the first thousand copies.

I have, &c.

T. STEPHENS.

The Hon. C. O'REILLY, Minister of Lands.

REFERRED to Mr. Reid for his observations.

C. O'REILLY.
3 Aug. 1881.

Lands and Works Office, 4th August, 1881.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Stephens' letter of the 18 July, which you have forwarded to me for my observations.

It is evident that I have misunderstood the suggestions of Mr. Stephens respecting the representation of the hills on the new Map of Tasmania. I have been always under the impression that they were to be shown by contour lines. Mr. Stephens points out this was a misconception on my

part, and refers to his Memo. of the 1st December, 1878, and which I may remark was addressed to Mr. Sprent, and was not seen by me until very recently when reading the correspondence published in the Journals of the House of Assembly.

I can only repeat what I stated in my letter of the 21st May,—that it is utterly impossible for me to devote any portion of my official time to the preparation of the Map, even if I had the assistance of a competent draftsman to work under me; but I would respectfully suggest, in order to bring about the completion of the work, the desirability of my being authorised to undertake its entire preparation in my private time, which I would be willing to do if adequately remunerated.

I have, &c

ALBERT REID.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands and Works.