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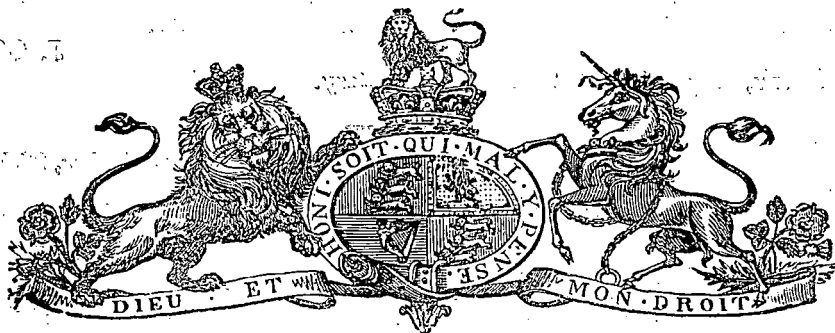
TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

THOMAS WATTS.

PAPERS AND CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO HIS CASE.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Secretary, November 7, 1876, and ordered
by the House to be printed.



Tremayne, 22nd October, 1875.

SIR,

I BEG to bring under your notice the case of Thomas Watts, an invalid at the Brickfields Depôt. I was there yesterday, and he told me he was 10 years at Port Arthur as a Constable, and stationed last at Eagle Hawk Neck, and drew his rations from Norfolk Bay. Last June he went for them as usual on horseback, and got thrown, and dislocated his shoulder and injured his hip. He wrote by post to Dr. Coverdale, requesting his attendance, and he sent word he was to go to Norfolk Bay, where the Dispenser would go to see him. Watts replied that he was not able to go to Norfolk Bay; still nobody came to see him at Eagle Hawk Neck. Four weeks elapsed, and he was then able to go to Port Arthur, when Dr. Coverdale ordered him to the Hospital and tried to set his shoulder, but failed, and sent him by schooner to Hobart Town Hospital. He arrived on the 13th August, and another attempt was made, which also failed; and on the 6th inst. he was discharged to the Brickfields,—crippled, and unable to get his living, and a burden on the community. He was receiving 2s. 6d. a day at Eagle Hawk Neck. I submit the case deserves enquiry.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

The Colonial Secretary.

FORWARDED to the Civil Commandant, Port Arthur, with the request that he will report upon the circumstances connected with this man's case.

B. TRAVERS SOLLY.
22nd October, 1875.

Civil Commandant's Office, Port Arthur, 27th October, 1875.

MEMORANDUM.

THE statement of Senior Constable Evenden, in letter attached, will explain the circumstances connected with the case of Thomas Watts, late a Constable at Eagle Hawk Neck.

It is necessary to observe, in the first place, that Watts never wrote to Dr. Coverdale; and, consequently, the request he says he made for professional attendance is untrue.

Secondly. It is equally untrue that any message was received of his inability to go to Norfolk Bay. It was, at any rate, quite possible for Watts to have proceeded there by boat had he not been able to walk.

Thirdly. Watts had no business whatever on horseback; and, therefore, the injuries he sustained were not inflicted in the performance of his public duties.

And fourthly. His pay was 2s. a day, and not 2s. 6d.

Reverting, however, to the circumstances attending the accident, it must be apparent that, in the absence of any known necessity for absolute medical attendance on the spot, every endeavour was made and assistance offered to give Watts the benefit of advice.

This he persistently refused, not from any inability on his part to obey instructions, as may be inferred from the postscript of a letter addressed to the Senior Constable a fortnight after his accident—"Should my shoulder take an unfavourable turn I shall endeavour to walk into Port Arthur"—but from a desire to avoid enquiry into certain charges against him, including misconduct at his station.

It is a fact that Watts was at Norfolk Bay just four weeks after receiving his injuries, and he could then have come on to the Settlement had he so felt inclined; but, notwithstanding the many messages sent him to do so, he never made his appearance until after his removal from office; and then for the first time was it ascertained that his shoulder was dislocated.

J. COVERDALE.

B. TRAVERS SOLLY, *Esq.*, *Assistant Colonial Secretary.*

Port Arthur, 26th October, 1875.

SIR,

IN compliance with your request that I would furnish you in writing with all particulars in connection with the late Constable's (Thomas Watts) accident whilst stationed at Eagle Hawk Neck, I have the honor to state that the first intimation I received from Constable Watts was a verbal message by the postman that he (Watts) had fell from a horse when proceeding to Norfolk Bay for his rations, and had met with certain injuries to his arm, shoulder, and hip. I enquired of the postman if the injuries were serious. He replied that Watts had told him no bones were broken and that nothing was out of place, and that all he (Watts) required was some liniment, which was forwarded by return of postman.

I remember, after I had reported these particulars to you, that you ordered the liniment to be sent; and it was forwarded with as little delay as possible. At the same time, you directed me to inform Watts by letter that either yourself or Mr. Robinson would meet him at Norfolk Bay and examine his injuries; but Watts did not comply, but again replied in writing, and by verbal message by postman, that all he (Watts) wanted was some more liniment, which was forwarded.

You directed me to inform Watts by letter to come to the Settlement, and that conveyance would be forwarded; but he declined to do so, stating he believed he was suffering more from rheumatism than from the accident.

I cannot now remember dates; but about a month or five weeks after the accident had occurred Watts came into the Settlement. I then took him up to your quarters, and in my presence you told Watts he had been misrepresenting his case, that his shoulder was out, and that he ought to have met medical aid at Norfolk Bay or to have come to Port Arthur as requested when conveyance was offered.

You immediately after requested me to instruct Watts to go up to the Hospital, and to request Mr. Robinson to be in attendance, when you would see what could be done in putting the shoulder in its place, but feared it was hopeless in consequence of Watts' neglect in not coming into Port Arthur as requested.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN EVENDEN, *Senior Constable.*

J. COVERDALE, *Esq.*, *Civil Commandant.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, 30th October, 1875.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Colonial Secretary to inform you, in reply to your note of the 22nd inst. relative to the case of a man named Thomas Watts, an invalid at the Brickfields, whose shoulder was dislocated while he was employed at Port Arthur, that your communication having been referred to the Civil Commandant for report, that officer's explanation has been received, and awaits your perusal at any time you may find it convenient to call at the office.

I have, &c.

(Signed) B. TRAVERS SOLLY.

P. T. SMITH, *Esq.*, *Tremayne.*

Tremayne, 2nd November, 1875.

SIR,

WHEN I called on you on the 30th ult., to see, with your permission, Dr. Coverdale's reply to my note of 22nd ult. relative to the case of Thomas Watts, you declined to let me show Watts that reply on the ground that you considered it satisfactory, and that you could not give me any facility for further investigation, and that if Watts was not satisfied he must lay his complaint before the Police Magistrate.

I submit that his case would not be entertained at the Police Office, as he makes no criminal charge, but simply complains of being a cripple for life through neglect while in Government service, and claims consideration.

I again ask for the loan of the correspondence, or for a copy; and I do so on the ground that Watts is charged by Dr. Coverdale with misconduct, which he alleges was the reason for his not coming to Port Arthur for advice.

The enclosed documents show that he was a man of good character, and Dr. Coverdale certifies that his conduct for 10 years has been satisfactory at the very time he imputes this misconduct. Dr. Coverdale further states that there was a boat at Eagle Hawk Neck which would have brought him to Norfolk Bay, but with a dislocated arm Watts could not row.

Further, I submit that Senior Constable Evenden's evidence is entitled to very little weight, from his late conviction and sentence.

According to what Watts tells me, and according to my recollection of Dr. Coverdale's explanation, the facts are very imperfectly stated; and the truth ought to be ascertained and justice done the man.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

The Colonial Secretary.

Tremayne, 8th November, 1875.

SIR,

WHEN I called on you on the 5th inst. for an answer to my note of the 2nd inst. respecting my request for a copy of Dr. Coverdale's explanation, on the ground that his charge against Watts for misconduct was contradicted by his own certificate, you still declined to furnish me with it, as you suggested that the charge might have been withdrawn and the certificate given out of kindness; and you could not give any facilities for impeaching the conduct of your superior officers, and that the Law Courts were open to any grievance.

I then mentioned other circumstances which you thought gave a different complexion to the matter, and I promised to put them in writing.

I went to the Brickfields yesterday and saw Watts again, to be sure I had not misunderstood him.

His story is, that his horse shied as he was going to Norfolk Bay as usual for rations on the 21st or 22nd June, and that he fell heavily and hurt his shoulder and hip, and had great difficulty in getting back to Eagle Hawk Neck. It was a borrowed horse, and Dr. Coverdale had seen him riding it at Port Arthur without making objection to his riding a horse.

The following day the post went, and he wrote to Senior Constable Evenden that he had had a fall and had hurt his shoulder and hip, and could not walk, and wanted medical treatment. Nobody came, and no notice taken.

Next post he wrote or sent again, and no answer. Not knowing that his shoulder was dislocated, and still unable from injury to the hip to walk or ride to Port Arthur, he then sent for some liniment. Ten days had now elapsed. The liniment came. It was too strong, and blistered the flesh. He then wrote or sent for some dressing to correct the blistering, and got with it a message that he was to go to Norfolk Bay, where the Dispenser would meet him.

A fortnight had now passed, and he wrote or sent he was unable to go to Norfolk Bay on foot or horseback. There was a boat at the Neck, but he could not use it; and the oars were so long it required two men to pull it. Still nobody came; and at the end of a month (20th July) he was able to walk to Port Arthur, and arrived about 5 P.M., and went at once to Dr. Coverdale. On stripping, he said, "Why, your shoulder is out." Late at night he was ordered to the Hospital, and Dr. Coverdale and the Dispenser proceeded to set it by a rope and pulley, without chloroform. After trying for about half an hour they gave it up; and Dr. Coverdale said he was going to town next day by the schooner, and would see him again on his return, but meantime he was to go back to the Neck.

On Dr. Coverdale's return, some days after, a man was sent to the Neck to take charge, but he would not stop, and Watts had to go in again to report. Dr. Coverdale ordered him back till he found somebody else. In about ten days another man was sent, to whom he gave up charge, and immediately returned to Port Arthur; and on the 8th August he got his discharge, with a certificate of good conduct, and two days after he was sent by schooner to Hobart Town.

On arrival he applied to Mr. Solly, who gave him an order of admission to the Hospital.

Another attempt was then made to set the shoulder, but it failed, as it was too long after the accident; and in due time he was invalided to the Brickfields,—a cripple for life, and probably a burden on the public.

Upon this statement I feel myself justified in asking again for a copy of Dr. Coverdale's and Evenden's explanation; and there can be no reason for refusing it if no blame attaches to anyone.

I may add that I believe Dr. Coverdale is allowed two horses for visiting out-stations; that Watts has been a Constable for 17 years without a single offence being recorded against him; and that Dr. Coverdale did not say that he had any complaint to make against Watts before or at the time of his discharge.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

The Colonial Secretary.

MEMORANDUM.

MR. P. T. Smith having been allowed the perusal of Dr. Coverdale's Memorandum of the 27th ultimo, and Constable Evenden's letter to the Commandant of the 26th, respecting the case of the man Thomas Watts, he has furnished for the perusal of the Colonial Secretary several excellent testimonials as to his character, including one from Dr. Coverdale, certifying that "Thomas Watts has been employed as Constable and Warder of Invalid Depôt at Port Arthur, Tasman's Peninsula, from March, 1865, to 22nd July, 1875, during which time his conduct and attention to his duties have been satisfactory. He now leaves without any fault of his own."

The Civil Commandant states that Watts refused to avail himself of the medical assistance offered, "not from any inability on his part to obey instructions, but from a desire to avoid enquiry into certain charges against him, including misconduct at his station."

As it appears from the above quoted Certificate that he left "without any fault of his own," and that his conduct "was satisfactory," the Commandant is requested to state the nature of the charges against Watts, whether they were enquired into, and how they were disposed of.

Mr. P. T. Smith has addressed another letter to the Colonial Secretary, copy enclosed, and the Commandant is requested to report upon the allegations therein contained, as the statements do not coincide with the report of the case already furnished by the Commandant and the letter of Constable Evenden.

Watts states that the day after the accident he wrote to Senior Constable Evenden, stating that he had hurt his shoulder and his hip, and could not walk, and that he wanted medical treatment. The Colonial Secretary requests that this letter to Evenden may be forwarded for his perusal.

Of this letter, and again of a second letter by the following Post, no notice appears to have been taken, and it was not until his repeated applications failed to obtain for him the medical attendance he wrote for that he sent for some liniment.

The Commandant, in his Memorandum of the 27th October, states that it was "quite possible for Watts to have proceeded there" (Norfolk Bay) "by boat had he not been able to walk," but it is not clear how the Commandant expected Watts to row the boat with a hurt shoulder.

The Commandant's attention is especially called to the statement that when, at the end of a month from the time of the accident, Watts' shoulder having been examined and the endeavour to reduce the dislocation having failed, he was sent back to his Station until Dr. Coverdale's return from town; and that, after he had returned, at least ten days was allowed to elapse before Watts was relieved and sent to town for the medical treatment of his dislocated shoulder.

(Signed) THOS. D. CHAPMAN.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 12th November, 1875.

Port Arthur, 20th November, 1875.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Memorandum of 12th instant, conveying also copy of a letter addressed to yourself, on 8th instant, by Philip T. Smith, Esq.

In reply, I must, to a comprehending of the case in question, recapitulate what I have before written.

I presume Mr. Smith, who appears to rely so implicitly upon the verbal testimony of Thomas Watts, will not dispute the validity of the man's writing; and therefore in asking attention to the two (2) documents furnished by him, and to the other statements, likewise enclosed, I trust that sufficient evidence will be found to remove further misconception on the subject.

Mr. Smith does not repeat the remark contained in his former letter of 22nd ultimo, that Watts "wrote by post to Dr. Coverdale, requesting his attendance,"—consequently, it is only fair to assume that he, Mr. Smith, had, in that particular, found out his mistake.

The expressions "wrote, or sent," are sufficiently admissible, as it would appear three letters were received and several messages also, but in no instance can any mention be traced of a request for medical attendance.

The particulars of the case are:—On Monday, 31st May, Watts met with his accident, (not 21st or 22nd June, as stated by Mr. Smith). On 1st June the postman would pass the Neck and return next day, upon which, 2nd, he conveyed some liniment to Watts, upon his own request. This at least upsets the assertion of "No notice (being) taken." On 15th June, Watts, as he says for the first time, writes letter marked A.; but so far from speaking of his inability to proceed to Norfolk Bay, states in his P.S., if necessary he would "endeavour to walk to Port Arthur." Lastly, on 13th July, he came to the Settlement, being six weeks (not the "end of a month, 20th July," according to Mr. Smith,) after the actual receipt of his injuries.

Document B. proves that he was at Norfolk Bay on 2nd, 4th, and 7th July; and had he on the first occasion, following out instructions, come on to Port Arthur, the probability is that he would not now be suffering from a dislocated shoulder.

Watts may have been a Constable for 17 years, and when in bondage may have exercised sufficient cleverness in bringing up a fellow prisoner to keep out of trouble himself, especially judging by his present attempt to cast blame on others.

The man has been known to myself for the past eighteen months, six of which as Warder in the Pauper Depot here, and twelve as Constable at Eagle Hawk Neck. During this period I had very few opportunities of seeing him, and remember upon one occasion observing him leaving the Settlement on horseback.

I certainly was not aware that he was in the habit of borrowing a horse, otherwise I should have taken exception to it; but under any circumstances, whatever injuries he might sustain from riding could not be considered as received in the performance of his public duties.

The statement that "Watts arrived at the Settlement on 20th July, about five P.M., and went at once to Dr. Coverdale," is an absolute falsehood. He came in on 13th, as already mentioned, and was on the Settlement about half-past three of that day; but I did not see him until he came to my house in company with the Senior Constable about half-past seven o'clock, when I immediately directed him to go to the Hospital, and then and there attended him. This therefore constitutes the "late at night" operation; and if chloroform were not used on the occasion it was from professional reasons better known to myself than they could be expected to be understood by Mr. Smith.

After sundry remarks about Watts being ordered back to his station, and my going to town, Mr. Smith concludes his letter in the following words:—"Dr. Coverdale did not say that he had any complaint to make against Watts before, or at the time of his discharge."

This is quite true,—in fact I had no conversation with the man farther than about his shoulder, believing at the time that his month's notice had expired and he was no longer a Constable.

Upon my return from town, however, on the 18th July, I learnt that Watts had gone back to the Neck, as his time would not expire until the 22nd. On the 21st he came in to Port Arthur to receive his pay and discharge; subsequently to which, upon the representations of the Station Officer, I consented to allow him, Watts, to continue at his station until the amount of his shop account was liquidated. Accordingly he went back for the second time to Eagle Hawk Neck, where he remained until he left the Peninsula by schooner from Norfolk Bay on 10th August.

The apparent objection that Watts had for not coming to head quarters must doubtless have arisen from a rumour of certain misconduct that he had been guilty of at the Neck; but as the rumour did not take a tangible form, and as he had received notice to leave before a charge was made, no enquiry into the matter took place.

It is now shown, by his letter of 15th June, that Watts might have come to the Settlement nearly a month before he did had he made the attempt; and it was entirely owing to the evasive and unsatisfactory messages I received as coming from him that caused me to direct a month's notice of the discontinuance of his services to be sent him.

As to the two horses allowed me for visiting out-stations, I can only remark that I use them as occasion requires; but, in the absence of any information as to the actual nature of Watts' injuries, I did not feel called upon at the time to ride 25 miles in anticipation of finding a dislocated shoulder or a broken hip-joint.

Mr. Smith is wrong again as to the date Watts got his discharge. He gives 9th August, whereas it was 22nd July, as correctly put in your memorandum. It is of no consequence perhaps farther than to show how incorrectly all his dates have been stated.

As respects the discharge itself, it has been customary to sign them, except in those instances where an official has been dismissed for any misconduct. In Watts' case, however, such a proceeding was not adopted, in consideration of his long service and from a desire not to deal harshly by the man.

I have withheld this communication one post, in expectation of having been able to add the testimony of the mail-man to those submitted: but as he has been prevented from delivering the mail himself upon the two last occasions, and is likely to be so for the next two or more, I am compelled no longer to wait for the wished-for statement.

In concluding, I beg to be understood as having as much sympathy for the man Watts as Mr. Smith can have. Every effort was made and attention given to afford relief to the patient, and it was only when it was found that further interference with the shoulder would have made its condition worse that the attempt at reduction of the dislocation was abandoned.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. COVERDALE.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

[Received from Senior Constable Evenden this 15th day of August, 1875.]

(Copy.)

Eagle Hawk Neck, 15th June, 1876.

MEMO.

I HAVE for the first time sat myself down to write, but I do not know whether I shall be able to say much, as it is with pain I rest my arm upon the table, and then only for a few minutes at the time.

I have to inform you that my shoulder is improving, although but slowly; but I am pleased to have to say that I do not think there is anything wrong with the bone. The bruises were very severe, and penetrated deeply, but the blistering done great good; but to make matters worse I am now suffering from a severe attack of rheumatism, so that I can hardly tell whether it is from that or the accident that I am suffering most from; but I think it is from the rheumatism, as it shifts about from one part of the arm to another twenty times during the day. I cannot get any sleep from the throbbing pain I endure; but upon the whole I think I may say I am much improved, although slowly. I got a severe bruise on the right side of my seat, which has prevented me from walking, otherwise should have come into Port Arthur.

I must have a spell now, as my arm is beginning to ache from leaning on it.

I do not know if you can make out one-half of the writing. I am so very nervous; I can scarcely keep the pen on the paper to finish a word.

I can assure you I am surprised I escaped with my life, as it could not have occurred on a worse spot; nothing but stones. It will be some time before I mount a horse again, although, had not the girth broke, I could have maintained my seat.

I do not hear anything about the coat other than Roberts informed me the requisition was on the table; I suppose to be read this day six months.

Excuse me saying more at the present time, and believe me,

Yours truly,

T. WATTS.

P.S.—Should my shoulder take an unfavourable turn I shall endeavour to walk to Port Arthur.

REPORT of the state of Road, Bridges, and Culverts on the Line of Road between Eagle Hawk Neck and Norfolk Bay, for the week ending 6th July, 1875.

The road is in fair order, but very wet and sloppy.

Bridges and culverts secure, with the exception of one culvert now undergoing repair.

Visited Norfolk Bay on the 2nd, 4th, and 7th inst. Found the buildings in the usual state: doors and windows secured.

THOMAS WATTS, *Constable in Charge.*
Eagle Hawk Neck, 7th July, 1875.

The Civil Commandant, Port Arthur.

GEORGE A. Robinson states: I am Dispenser at Port Arthur. I remember making up some liniment for Thomas Watts. Upon reference to my books, I find it was on 2nd June last. I repeated the liniment, and also sent him some simple dressing afterwards. Watts was known to suffer from rheumatism: and I was given to understand the application was for that malady. I assisted the Medical Officer, about 8 o'clock on the evening of 13th July, in an attempt to reduce a dislocation of the shoulder under which Watts was labouring, but it was not successful. Pulleys were used.

G. A. ROBINSON.

GEORGE Whittington states: I am Station Officer at Port Arthur, and keep a private store there. I remember Thomas Watts being on the Settlement on the evening of 13th July. He returned to his station at Eagle Hawk Neck, and came back on 21st following. At that time he was in my debt for articles supplied him. Hearing

that he was dismissed, and had received his cheque, I asked him for payment of his account. He replied immediately, "I have no money." Seeing that he wished to cheat me, I proceeded to the Civil Commandant's quarters, and reported the same. The Commandant then said, under the circumstances, Watts would be allowed to remain as Constable until the amount was worked out. I had heard the rumour of Watts having carried on an improper intercourse with a girl at the Neck.

G. WHITTINGTON.

JOHN W. Roberts states: I am Clerk at Port Arthur. About the middle of June last I wrote, by direction of the Civil Commandant, to Constable Thomas Watts to come in to the Settlement. He sent word, in reply, that he was suffering from rheumatism, and could not manage the distance at present. I sent again some days after, and told him that if he was bad he ought to come to Port Arthur for medical treatment. To this I received no reply, but learnt through the postman that Watts was much better, but suffered on each change of weather. I was then directed to send him notice that his services would be dispensed with at the end of a month. I heard nothing more from him until I met him on the Settlement on the evening of the 13th July. In conversation he told me he had had a fall from a horse about six weeks before, and hurt his shoulder, and thought it had brought on rheumatism. On feeling his shoulder I told him it was out. He said, "Nonsense; I can move my arm quite easily, but not lift it to my head." He afterwards went to Dr. Coverdale. Before Watts came to the Settlement on the 13th July, I had heard the rumour of his having sexual intercourse with a girl at Eagle Hawk Neck, and that she was in the family way to him.

J. W. ROBERTS.

JOHN Evenden states: I am Senior Constable at Port Arthur. That furnished by me on 26th October last was a correct account, so far as it went, of the circumstances attending the case of Thomas Watts. I think I received three letters from him from the time of his accident until I saw him on the Settlement. I only kept the one I gave to the Civil Commandant in August last. The two others were on private matters, such as procuring articles from the shop, and had no reference to his injuries whatever. I never received any written information from Watts whatever of his accident beyond what is contained in his letter of 15th June. He used to send messages for what he required, and I had the medicine procured from the Dispensary, and forwarded by postman upon each occasion of his return with the mail; in short, I was in the habit of enquiring about Watts every time the post came in; and three or four times the man told me Watts had said he was sure his shoulder was not out (for in one of my letters I asked the question), nor were any of his bones broken. On the occasion of my telling Watts to come to Norfolk Bay, I wrote him, if he were not able to walk, to apply to either Messrs. Pidgeon or Connolly for some one to pull him there in one of their boats. When Watts came to the Settlement on 13th July he told me he had been accused of getting a girl at the Neck in the family way. I had heard the rumour before he met with his accident. He arrived at head quarters about half-past 3 in the afternoon, but I did not see him until nearly 7 o'clock. I then asked him if he had seen the Commandant. He replied, "No," and seemed to object to do so, saying something about his being out of office. He, however, accompanied me to Dr. Coverdale's residence about half-past 7, and was directed to go at once to the Hospital. Watts returned to Eagle Hawk Neck on the following day, as his month's notice would not have been completed until 22nd July. On the 21st he again came to the Settlement to receive his pay and discharge, when I received instructions to the effect that he was to remain as Constable until a debt he owed to the shop was worked out. He then once more returned to his station, and subsequently left Norfolk Bay by schooner for Hobart Town on 10th August.

J. EVENDEN.

Tremayne, 25th November, 1875.

SIR,

I REQUEST the favour of your permitting Thomas Watts, an invalid at the Brickfields establishment, to come and see me on business.

I have, &c.

The Colonial Secretary.

(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 26th November, 1875.

THE Colonial Secretary presents his compliments to Mr. Philip Smith, and begs to inform him, that, in accordance with his request, the Superintendent of the Brickfields Invalid Depôt has been directed to permit Thomas Watts to visit Mr. Smith at his private residence to-morrow, the 27th instant.

Watts to return to the Depôt to-morrow evening.

P. T. SMITH, *Esq., Tremayne.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, 26th November, 1875.

MEMO.

THE Superintendent of the Brickfields Invalid Depôt is directed to permit Thomas Watts to visit Mr. P. T. Smith at his private residence to-morrow, the 27th instant.

Watts to return to the Depôt to-morrow evening.

(Signed) THOS. D. CHAPMAN.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 30th November, 1875.

SIR,

WITH reference to the case of the man Thomas Watts, formerly a Constable at Eagle Hawk Neck, and now an inmate of the Brickfields Invalid Depôt, suffering from an irreducible dislocation of the shoulder, which case has been brought under my special notice by Mr. P. T. Smith, I deem it my duty to inform you that the Government exonerate you from any culpable neglect, inasmuch

as the man himself failed to inform you of his accident at the time, and in his communications to your subordinate officers referred his sufferings to rheumatism, for which the necessary application was forwarded.

Now that the result of that accident is known, it is of course a subject of regret that you did not, when you heard that one of your Constables at an out-station was incapacitated for active duty, at once proceed to visit him, and ascertain the nature and extent of his injuries, the distance of his Station from Head Quarters being only about twelve miles, or a morning ride; and I trust that on any future occasion, when you have reason to know that from any cause the efficiency of any Official is interfered with, you will take immediate steps to supply his place, or at any rate personally ascertain the cause of his incapacity for the discharge of his duties.

I cannot, however, pass over without comment the fact that when you had satisfied yourself that Watts' dislocation could not be reduced, you caused or allowed him to return to his Station, in order that he might work out a debt to the storekeeper at Port Arthur.

Under no circumstances can such a course be justified, for it is evident that the interests of the Public Service were made to suffer for the benefit of a private individual; and I have to request that you will clearly understand for the future, that any debts contracted by Constables or others at Port Arthur are contracted at the risk of the storekeeper, and not at that of the public Revenue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. D. CHAPMAN.

The Civil Commandant, Port Arthur.

Tremayne, 17th December, 1875.

SIR,

I WROTE you 2nd November, and enclosed four or five certificates of character in "Thomas Watts'" favour for your perusal. On 29th November I wrote and requested their return. The papers were mislaid for a time. I now request to be favoured with the certificates I refer to.

The Colonial Secretary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

[NOTE.—Certificates returned as requested, 17th December, '75.]

Tremayne, 20th December, 1875.

SIR,

HAVING received your permission to read and make extracts from the correspondence relating to the case of "Thomas Watts," I availed myself of that privilege at your office on 16th inst.; and I now beg leave to inform you that it is my intention to publish my letters, and so much of Dr. Coverdale's explanations, and your communications to him and myself, as is necessary to a right understanding of the case.

A grievous injury and injustice, as I believe, has been done the man; and as in your communication to Dr. Coverdale of 30th November you exonerate him from any culpable neglect, and as I infer approve of his summary discharge from the constabulary on becoming unfit for active duty after seventeen years' service,—without a single offence, I believe, being recorded against him, and with a certificate of good conduct given him by Dr. Coverdale on his discharge,—I feel it my duty to place the matter before the public, that every body may form his own judgment of Dr. Coverdale's discharge of his duties, and of Watts' claim to compensation.

As an additional reason for my taking this step, I beg to refer you to my two letters of 22nd December and 5th January last, after my visit to Port Arthur, in which I called your attention to several matters which I took the liberty of suggesting required investigation.

Neither letter was acknowledged, nor have I ever verbally received any satisfaction from you on the subject, further than that Port Arthur would soon be broken up.

I shall take this opportunity of publishing those letters, in further justification of my calling notice to Watts' case.

The Colonial Secretary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP T. SMITH.

Tremayne, 4th January, 1876.

SIR,

ON 31st December you favoured me with an interview on the matters I had laid before you relating to the Brickfields Dépôt, when I took the liberty of expressing my dissatisfaction with Mr. Withrington's last letter to you of 24th December, as a reply to mine of 11th December, and I par-

ticularized his ordering me out of that establishment, the bucket affair, his charges against me about my insulting him, and the very inadequate attendance provided for the Upper Ward; and you intimated to me that you considered no further explanation was necessary, and that I must consider the matter closed. I expressed to you my deep mortification and disappointment.

On 20th December I addressed a note to you in reference to Watts' case, signifying my intention to publish my letters, and so much of Dr. Coverdale's explanations and your communications to him and myself as was necessary to a right understanding of the case.

On 23rd December I called on you to obtain permission to publish my extracts from Dr. Coverdale's explanations and your communications to him, as I had not signified my intention to publish if I thought it necessary, when you allowed me to read and make extracts from them, and you raised objections to my publishing those extracts.

Both the Brickfields and Port Arthur matters appear to me of great public interest, and though you preclude me from publishing communications between you and your subordinates, I feel myself quite at liberty to publish my own letters.

Each case, I think, deserves more consideration than you have given to it; and as Parliament is not sitting, I consider myself justified in laying both cases before the public, and I regret that my statements are incomplete without the answers and your remarks; and I presume you still forbid me the use of them.

The Colonial Secretary.

I am, &c.

(Signed)

PHILIP T. SMITH.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 15th January, 1876.

THE Superintendent of the Brickfields Establishment will be good enough to inform the Colonial Secretary hereon the age of Thomas Watts, formerly a Constable at Port Arthur, but now an inmate of the Brickfields as a pauper.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN.

The Superintendent at the Brickfields Establishment, Hobart Town.

THOMAS WATTS, per *England*, admitted to Brickfields from Colonial Hospital 6.10.75, aged 72.

JNO. WITHRINGTON.

17th January, 1876.

Civil Commandant's Office, Port Arthur, 22nd January, 1876.

SIR,

AT length I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 30th November last.

The delay in replying thereto has been occasioned by my desire to obtain the statement (herewith enclosed) of the mailman, and which I had no opportunity of securing before Wednesday, 19th instant.

As anticipated, the man Thorne has thrown no new light upon Watts' case. On the contrary, his evidence goes to confirm the correctness of my report generally, and to prove that no dependence can be placed upon the statements of a man whom, I have lately been informed, was always more or less under the influence of opium.

I take this opportunity of forwarding a memorandum I received from the Senior Constable. It bears no date, but upon reference to the books of the establishment it was found that the informant, M'Ginness, visited the Settlement on 23rd June, two days before Watts' letter; and it must have been upon this memorandum that I, in a great measure, acted in dispensing with Watts' services, when finding after its receipt that he did not offer any reason for not obeying the instruction to come on to head quarters.

I beg likewise to submit the accompanying letter of the Dispenser, attesting, according to his experiences of a long life, that proper means were adopted, *secundum artem*, in attempting the reduction of the dislocation.

Having so far exhausted the subject, I turn now to notice the latter portions of your letter, and first as respects my not visiting Watts at Eagle Hawk Neck.

This I should undoubtedly have done had I believed there had been any real necessity for it. Twice a week, at the outset, I received messages of his being better and able to be about; and when it is understood that the *quasi* Constables at the outstations, excepting Saltwater River, are placed

there more in charge of the buildings than for effective police purposes, it will be conceded, I hope, that the efficiency of the service was not jeopardised by my not having visited the locality.

Secondly, I fully admit that I erred in allowing Watts to go back to work out his shop account, and can only screen myself under the Latin idiom, "*Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.*"

Circumstances (which, however, it is not necessary to particularise) existed at the time to make his an exceptional case perhaps in some degree, and viewing it in that light I yielded to the importunity of the request, and can only express my regret that I did so, although, so far as the man's condition was concerned, I was of opinion it was beyond redemption.

In conclusion, I have to assure you that a similar occurrence is not likely to take place. In short, had I adopted the more summary process of dismissing the man, in place of giving him a month's notice to leave, he would not now be a cripple, and I should have been spared the most ungenerous, un-Britishlike attack of Philip T. Smith, Esq., of Tremayne.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. COVERDALE

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

M'GINNESS states: Watts has nearly recovered from his accident; that it is principally rheumatism in the same arm, which occasionally leaves and attacks him again; that he can move his shoulder, arm, and fingers, except when attacked with rheumatism.

J. EVENDEN.

The Civil Commandant.

SYDNEY THORNE states: I reside at Sorell, and have the contract for carrying the mail therefrom to Port Arthur. About six months ago I remember seeing the Constable (Thomas Watts) at Eagle Hawk Neck. I was in the habit of always calling at the Station to leave letters and papers. At the time referred to Watts told me he had had an accident from a fall from a horse; he was up at the time. I told him I thought his shoulder was out, and that he ought to have medical aid. He replied he didn't think it was, but it was only a severe bruise on the bone from the fall. He also said something about rheumatism having set in from the injury. I distinctly recollect telling Watts to lose no time in going in to the Settlement, as if his shoulder happened to be out it would be difficult to put it in after some time. He, however, did not seem to think there was any necessity for his going, and asked me to get him some liniment. I took the liniment out to him on my return, and when coming to Port Arthur again he said it had blistered his shoulder, and he wanted some dressing for it. To the best of my recollection I only carried one letter for Watts; it was directed to Senior Constable Evenden. I conveyed messages also to Evenden. It is so long ago that I cannot speak positively of anything that occurred. I only know that Watts never asked me to see the doctor, nor to convey either letter or message to him. I had heard the report of Watts having got some girl in the family way at the Neck, and he was annoyed at such a report having been made, as he seemed to think it had led to his dismissal. I used to see Watts every time I passed, and question him about his arm. In going to Sorell it is about 8 o'clock in the morning, and coming from about 12, that I passed the Neck. On all occasions Watts was up; he was not confined to bed, although he complained of having hurt his hip.

SYDNEY THORNE.

I never mentioned my suspicion of Watts' shoulder being out to anyone except himself. I only thought it might be out from my father speaking of dislocations occurring from accidents of one sort or another.

S. T.

Taken before me this 19th day of January, 1876, at Port Arthur.

J. COVERDALE, J.P.

Port Arthur, 21st January, 1876.

SIR,

In accordance with your request that I should give, for the information of the Government, a *precis* of my experiences in the medical profession; and, based upon those experiences, my opinion as to the method of treatment adopted upon the occasion of attempting a reduction of the dislocated shoulder of Thomas Watts, I have the honor to state—1st. That I have gone through a regular course of study at Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospitals; that I have seen a great deal of private practice both in England and this Colony; that I have assisted at numerous surgical operations of all descriptions; and that I have no hesitation in saying that every means were adopted by yourself in the late attempt to reduce the long-standing dislocated humerus of the man Thomas Watts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GEO. ARNOTT ROBINSON.

The Civil Commandant.