

(No. 6.)



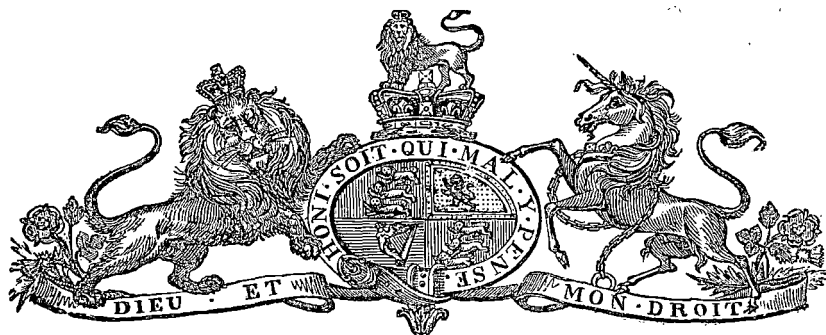
1856.

T A S M A N I A.

L I G H T - H O U S E S .

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS FROM NEW SOUTH WALES,  
VICTORIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AND TASMANIA.

Presented to the House by Command of His Excellency, and ordered to be printed,  
3 December, 1856.



## REPORT

*Of the Commissioners appointed by the Governments of NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, and TASMANIA, to confer upon the subject of Light-houses in the several Australian Colonies.*

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### *Members of the Commission.*

WILLIAM THOMAS NAPIER CHAMP, ESQ., *the Hon. the Chief Secretary of Tasmania, Chairman.*

H. H. BROWNE, ESQ., *Immigration Agent of New South Wales.*

J. H. KAY, ESQ., *Commander R.N., and Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Victoria.*

BLOOMFIELD DOUGLAS, ESQ., *Naval Officer and Harbour Master, and Master of the Trinity House of South Australia.*

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1. THE Commissioners appointed by the respective Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, to consider the adoption of some general and uniform scheme for the erection and maintenance of the Light-houses on the Australian Coasts, having assembled in Melbourne, proceeded, in the first instance, to discuss the proposal of His Excellency the Governor-General as to the expediency of appointing a General Board, composed of Delegates from the different Australian Colonies,—to which Board it was considered powers might be given similar to those of the Trinity Board in London, or the Commissioners of the Northern Lights in Scotland.

In the official letters from the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales addressed to the other Colonies interested in this question, the Governor-General considered it desirable that the Commissioners from each Colony should be prepared to discuss—

1. The constitution and powers of the Board.
2. The mode in which the funds which must be placed at its disposal are to be raised.
3. The provisions of the enactments which must be submitted to the Legislatures of the different Colonies in order to give the Board a legal existence, and such powers as may be necessary for the performance of its duties.
4. The arrangements which must be made in order to enable the Representatives of each Colony in the Board to control and superintend the Lights in that Colony.

In considering the first proposal, viz.—what should be the nature of the constitution and powers of the Board,—the Commissioners are of opinion that, to give such an existence to a Board of this character as will ensure an effective and unanimous management likely to produce the results anticipated, it must be necessary not only to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the nature of the regulations that will be requisite for its guidance, but also that an unanimity of action should be agreed upon as to the collection and disposal of the funds which it would be necessary to obtain from each Colony interested in its formation.

To arrive at such a conclusion in the present conference appears to be impracticable, for the following reasons :—New South Wales at present levies no Light Dues, her Ports being entirely free from the imposition of any dues excepting Pilotage; Victoria is similarly situated in respect to Light Dues, but levies a Tonnage Duty of one shilling per ton; South Australia and Tasmania both maintain their Lights by special dues levied for that purpose.

Both these latter Colonies object to any interference in the disposal of the sums so raised : Tasmania on the ground that her Legislature would be naturally jealous in allowing interference with the money appropriated by them for a specific purpose; and South Australia in consequence of the existence of a Trinity Board, which retains the power of levying rates only on account of Lights erected on their own coasts; whilst at the same time Victoria is unwilling, on account of the existence of large Tonnage Dues, to increase the burthens on shipping visiting her shores; and New South Wales, although willing to co-operate in a general scheme for such an important purpose, is naturally reluctant to make a retrograde step in the imposition of Shipping Dues, now altogether abolished.

The Commissioners have considered it hopeless, under the circumstances, to establish a Board that will combine the materials requisite for a vigorous management; and have therefore decided that, in their opinion, the same results may be brought about by ascertaining in the first instance where additional Light-houses ought to be erected, and then by apportioning the expense of their erection and maintenance between the Colonies interested in such proportions as the amount of tonnage passing these Lights will indicate.

Secondly. The Commissioners are of opinion that the question of providing funds requisite for the support of their own Lights, or of the proportions of such other Lights as may be allotted for their maintenance, may be fairly left for the consideration of the respective Governments, to be raised in such a manner as may be most in accordance with the views of their several Legislatures.

It does not appear necessary to them to entertain the third and fourth proposals, in consequence of the decision at which they have arrived on the subject of a Central Board.

2. In this view of the case, the Commissioners proceeded to avail themselves of the best information of a practical character which could be obtained, by the examination of thirty-nine witnesses, who consisted principally of master mariners employed both in the coasting and over-sea trade, and who might be considered competent to give such information as would be useful in enabling them to arrive at satisfactory conclusions as to where additional Lights might be required.

3. With reference to the Light-houses already in existence, the evidence adduced will justify the Commissioners in arriving at the conclusion that they are suitably placed, and sufficiently powerful for the purposes for which they were erected. The evidence, however, has produced an impression on their minds that the Light on Gabo Island, being only an erection of a temporary character, and therefore liable to destruction by fire, might, with advantage to the navigation of the coast, be constructed more substantially, and be at the same time removed to the south-eastern extremity of the Island, at such an increased altitude as would extend its radius of vision to the distance of twenty miles. Some of the witnesses state that this Light is not always of such a brilliancy as might be expected from a lantern of its capacity and power; but this deficiency may perhaps be attributable either to its low altitude or to some defect in its management. The necessity of maintaining a light of the greatest efficiency on this important turning point of the Australian coast is obvious to every one.

4. From the tenor of the evidence attached to this Report, the Commissioners consider that the erection of the following additional Light-houses will greatly facilitate the navigation of these coasts; viz.—

1. Cape Borda.
2. Cape Northumberland, in the Province of South Australia.
3. Cape Schank.
4. Wilson's Promontory, in the Colony of Victoria.
5. King's Island, in the Colony of Tasmania.
6. Cape St. George, in the Colony of New South Wales.

### 1. CAPE BORDA, AND 2. CAPE NORTHUMBERLAND.

5. The Commissioners have been informed by the evidence of Mr. Douglas, the Officer representing South Australia, that instructions have been already given by that Government for the speedy erection of Light-houses on Capes Borda and Northumberland; and as these two lights may be considered more immediately beneficial to that Colony, it is thought that the expense of their erection and maintenance may be fairly borne by the Government of South Australia.

### 3. CAPE SCHANK.

6. The importance of erecting a Light on this portion of the coast of Victoria has been strongly urged upon the consideration of the Commissioners by nearly every witness that they have examined. Its advantages will not only be felt by the direct trade to the Ports of Melbourne and Geelong, but it will also be a benefit to vessels working through the Straits in either direction against contrary winds; and as a guide to vessels seeking shelter in Western Port in adverse weather its utility will be fully appreciated. The locality was viewed by the Commissioners on their return from an examination of Wilson's Promontory; and there do not appear to be any engineering difficulties which would prevent its erection at a reasonable cost, or its maintenance by overland communication. The Commissioners recommend that, in contradistinction to the Light on Cape Otway, the Light now recommended to be placed on Cape Schank be a first class intermittent light, with intervals of thirty seconds, to be placed on a tower fifty feet high, and similar in its character to that erected by the South Australian Government on the Troubridge Shoals at the entrance to the Gulf of St. Vincent; and as this Light is urgently required for the additional safety of the large amount of over-sea and coasting trade entering Port Phillip Heads, the expense of its erection and maintenance should be borne by the Government of Victoria.

### 4. WILSON'S PROMONTORY.

7. The position of this headland, in the most intricate part of the navigation of Bass's Straits, has impressed the minds of the Commissioners with the absolute necessity of erecting a Light-house in its immediate vicinity. As the great high-road to the over-sea and coasting trade from Victoria to the Colonies of New South Wales, Tasmania, and New Zealand, and from South Australia to New South Wales, Tasmania (by the eastern route), and New Zealand, its position demanded the most attentive consideration, surrounded as it is by numerous dangers lying in the direct track, some hidden and some of a less dangerous character, the expediency of erecting this Light has been a subject of lengthy investigation.

The principal difficulty which the Commissioners have had to contend with has been in deciding upon a position for this Light, in which the greatest amount of advantage could be obtained consistent with what could be practically accomplished. Many of the witnesses most conversant with that locality were of opinion that the Ten-foot Rock, situated four miles south of the south-east extreme of the Promontory, would be the best position. Some recommended the Island of Rodondo; whilst others advocated the necessity of placing one light on the Cleft Island, and another on the southernmost of the Seal Islands. The Promontory itself was also suggested: but most of the witnesses were unable to establish to the satisfaction of the Commissioners that it would afford a sufficient guide to vessels coming from the eastward to enable them to clear the Seal Islands.

With this conflicting evidence before them, and feeling the importance of satisfactorily deciding upon a matter of so much moment to the Colonies interested, the Commissioners considered it advisable to visit the locality themselves, and ascertain by personal examination the most favourable position.

They accordingly put themselves in communication with the Government of Victoria, who at once, in the most handsome manner, placed the *Victoria* steam sloop at their disposal. The opportunity thus afforded enabled them at once to arrive at the conclusion that the Cleft Island, recommended by some of the witnesses as a site for a Light-house, was not only inaccessible, but perfectly impracticable for communication by boats; that the Island of Rodondo was similarly objectionable, not only on account of its inaccessibility, but also in consequence of its extreme height, which would be likely to render a light on its summit frequently obscured; and that the "Ten-foot Rock," the site most advantageous of all the positions recommended, appeared to present impracticable difficulties, which no engineering skill could surmount except at an enormous expenditure of money and risk of human life. During the visit of

the *Victoria*, the weather being at the time comparatively fine, the sea was making a clean breach over this rock, with sufficient violence to have washed away the commencement of any structure, together with the workmen engaged.

The south-eastern pitch of the Promontory was next examined, and found to afford advantages of position superior to what had been contemplated. The extreme point consists of a bold headland of granite formation, level on its surface, and standing at an elevation of about three hundred feet; landing was effected in its immediate vicinity with facility, and no engineering difficulties appeared to present themselves which could prevent the construction of a Light-house at a moderate cost. Observations were taken by the Marine Surveyor from a spot selected by the Commissioners, which gave a clear sea horizon of 19 points of the compass; viz.—from Cape Wellington bearing north  $34^{\circ}$  east to the southern extremity of Cleft Island bearing south  $72^{\circ}$  west. To vessels approaching from the north east this Light will be visible under ordinary circumstances at a distance of twenty-five miles, or nine miles to the north east of the Seal Islands; and, when shut in by Cape Wellington, will warn the navigator of a too near approach to the shoals in the vicinity of Corner Inlet. In approaching the Promontory from the westward, the Light open of Cleft Island will enable vessels to shape a course with confidence clear of the dangers in this locality; whilst to vessels from Port Phillip bound to the eastward this Light will be invaluable. Having taken a departure from the Light-house on Cape Schank, and continued on the usual course for fifty-two miles, the Light on Wilson's Promontory will show clear of the south end of Cleft Island at a distance of fourteen miles. The position of the hidden dangers in the vicinity of the Promontory, being within the radius of this Light, will also be clearly pointed out.

In the immediate vicinity of this headland, ample shelter can be obtained in Waterloo Bay, which was found to be not only available during westerly gales, but also capable of affording shelter to *small vessels* in southerly gales. Wood and water are also to be procured in abundance; and in the establishment of this Light the Commissioners would recommend that it be placed on a tower fifty feet high, and be a fixed catoptrick light of the first class.

In consequence of the advantages to be derived from this Light-house by the trade of the respective Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, the Commissioners would suggest that the expense of its construction and maintenance should be borne by those Colonies in equitable proportions.

From authentic information obtained by the Commissioners, they have ascertained that the large proportion of the tonnage to which this particular Light will be beneficial (beyond a very small fraction which might be fairly chargeable to South Australia) will be absorbed by the Colonies of New South Wales and Victoria,—and by them the Commissioners therefore recommend the expense should be defrayed, for its erection and maintenance, in equal proportions. In releasing the Colony of South Australia from her proper contribution towards the maintenance and erection of this Light, the Commissioners conceive that, as considerable advantage will be obtained by the trade of New South Wales and Victoria in proceeding to the westward from the Light now in course of erection on Cape Northumberland, this may be taken as a reasonable set-off in favor of that Colony for the advantage she will derive from the use of the Light on Wilson's Promontory.

## 5. KING'S ISLAND.

8. The establishment of a Light on this Island has been frequently urged on the notice of the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales by the Chambers of Commerce in those Colonies, as well as in the neighbouring Colony of Tasmania, in consequence of the many lamentable shipwrecks which have from time to time taken place on its iron-bound shores. In the month of August, 1855, the Government of Victoria despatched a Board of Officers to investigate and report as to the most eligible site for a Light-house on that Island; and the Report made by them is hereunto appended, recommending a site for its erection on Cape Wickham, the northern extremity of the Island.

On reference to the evidence given by the witnesses examined by the Commissioners, it will be seen that much difference of opinion exists in the minds of those persons who have frequently visited its neighbourhood, not only as to the position in which the Light might be most suitably placed, but also as to whether such a

Light would be at all beneficial in its results, or be more likely to lead the mariner among the dangers situated in the immediate vicinity.

The Commissioners have very carefully considered this most important subject; and although they are clearly of opinion that it is contrary to all general principle to light inside a danger, still they conceive that in this instance the principle may be safely deviated from, and that a Light should be erected on this Island to warn navigators of the dangers to be apprehended from a too close approach to the reefs surrounding its northern coast.

It has been urged by some of the witnesses that the New Year's Islands (lying at a distance of eight miles from the northern extremity of King's Island) afford advantages for the site of a Light-house beyond the position recommended in the Report of the Board.

The Commissioners have attached considerable weight to these opinions, more particularly as the majority of the wrecks have occurred to the southward of the New Year's Islands: but having ascertained beyond a doubt that the point recommended by the Board of Officers is not more liable to be capped in bad weather than ordinary headlands, but that the elevation at which this Light is proposed to be placed will afford a radius of vision to the southward of the Islands themselves, they coincide in the recommendation of that Board.

In advising the erection of a Light-house on this Island, the Commissioners wish to guard themselves from affording the public any reasonable supposition that this Light can be at all considered in the position of a great highway light for the navigation of the Straits. The south coast of New Holland at the western entrance to Bass's Straits being free from danger, affords, in their opinion, the safest shore for the prudent mariner to approach; and they conceive that the Light on King's Island is only to be regarded as a beacon for warning navigators of danger rather than as a leading light to a great thoroughfare.

In arriving at this decision they have not been unmindful that, if the Light was placed on the New Year's Islands, it would not be of any service to vessels working through the Straits from the eastward, neither could it become a guide for vessels seeking shelter under the lee of the Island during westerly gales; but, whilst thus adopting the views of the Board of Officers as to the position of this Light-house, the Commissioners would advise that before any expense is incurred in its erection it should be carefully ascertained whether any real necessity exists for building the tower to the great height of 120 feet (as recommended in that Report), or whether the requisite advantages might not be obtained in constructing a tower of lesser altitude, by which the expense would be considerably diminished.

The Light on Cape Otway being revolving, it will be necessary that the one to be erected on King's Island should be a fixed catoptric light of the highest class of intensity. This Light will be of the greatest service to the Colony of Victoria, in consequence of the great amount of her over-sea trade arriving from the westward. New South Wales will receive the next greatest benefit, for similar reasons; whilst Tasmania will secure considerable advantage to her trade to and from Victoria and South Australia, as well as to her over-sea trade coming from the westward and bound to the River Tamar. On these grounds the proportion of the expense of its erection and maintenance should, in the opinion of the Commissioners, be borne as follows:—

Victoria	- - - -	One-half.
New South Wales	- -	One-fourth.
Tasmania	- - -	One-fourth.

Whenever public notice is given of the Light on King's Island being ready for exhibition, the Commissioners would strongly recommend that it be accompanied by a caution to Masters of vessels that this Light is not intended as an encouragement for them to borrow on the Island under any circumstances that can be avoided, but that it is only placed there as a beacon to enable them to clear a danger, if by unforeseen circumstances they find themselves in that locality.

#### 6. CAPE ST. GEORGE.

9. This headland, situated on the coast of New South Wales, has from its position frequently endangered the safety of vessels bound to Sydney from the southward. A deep indentation lying to the westward of this Cape has been the scene of several wrecks,—principally caused by the indraught usually setting in on the coast,

assisted by the ocean swell, and also by the want of some distinguishing mark to warn the mariner of his proximity to danger. From the evidence of the witnesses conversant with this coast (more particularly the Masters of steam-ships and coasters), there is an unanimous feeling that a Light-house should be erected on Cape St. George; and in this view the Commissioners agree, believing that it will be of considerable service to the coasting trade of New South Wales. The headland is of a sufficient elevation to give a large radius of vision, and therefore the tower of the Light-house only requires to be of a sufficient height to work the revolving machinery; and the light should be intermittent, of the second class, showing its greatest intensity at intervals of thirty seconds.

This Light being beneficial to the coasting trade of New South Wales and Victoria in the same ratio as the Light about to be erected on Cape Schank, the Commissioners consider that, as the latter Light is proposed to be erected and maintained by the Government of Victoria, the former may fairly be chargeable on the Revenues of New South Wales.

10. With reference to the Lights already in existence and maintained by the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, the Commissioners do not propose to disturb the existing arrangements, believing that the expenses are fairly distributed between those Colonies.

11. In continuing to allot the whole expense of the Goose and Swan Islands Lights to the Colony of Tasmania, the Commissioners have not been unmindful of the benefits which are derived by Victoria in her trade passing through Banks' Straits; but they consider that, as the erection and maintenance of the Cape Schank Light is to be borne solely by the latter Colony, and the Light-house on Wilson's Promontory is to be erected and maintained at the joint expense of New South Wales and Victoria, the advantages accruing to the Tasmanian trade therefrom will be an equivalent for the proportion which might otherwise be charged to Victoria for the use of the first-named lights.

12. Some evidence has been given touching the necessity for the erection of a light on the eastern coast of Tasmania in the vicinity of the Eddystone Point: the trade, however, which passes this locality being at present of a limited amount, the Commissioners do not see any immediate necessity for its erection.

13. The question of Harbour Lights has not been passed over without consideration; but the Commissioners think the establishment of any additional ones that may be requisite ought more properly to be suggested by the Officers representing their respective Governments.

14. In connection with the important subject upon which the Commissioners have been instructed to report, they have not been unmindful of the necessity which exists for placing the management of the several Light-houses of the Colonies on the most economical basis consistent with due and perfect efficiency; and from the evidence of Mr. Douglas it appears that, in the Colony of South Australia, this duty is performed by a Board appointed for that purpose. This Board undertakes not only the management of the Light-houses, but also the collection and disbursement of the funds arising from the dues levied on the shipping for that purpose; and while it appears to retain the confidence of the community, its operations (it is believed) have been beneficial to the trade and navigation of the Colony.

The Commissioners having decided that it will not at present be expedient (for the reasons before assigned) to establish a Central Board, nevertheless consider that, should it be practicable to establish an unanimity of management of the Lights in the several Colonies interested, much advantage would be obtained, not only in facilitating the operations of future conferences of a similar character to the present one, but also in securing the best information on all points equally beneficial to each of the respective Colonies.

15. The Commissioners consider that it must be obvious to all persons interested in the navigation of Bass's Straits, that much of the safety to be accomplished by the additional Lights herein recommended must depend not only on maintaining them in their most perfect efficiency, but also in securing at all times and under all circumstances *their distinctive features*; and they would therefore urge these observations on their respective Governments for their consideration.

16. In arriving at the conclusions already set forth as to the erection and maintenance of the Six additional Lights, the Commissioners have been guided

not so much by the actual dangers which exist in their several localities, as by the advantages which will be obtained by the commercial and maritime portions of the communities in the several Australian Colonies; and they fearlessly assert that, if their recommendations are carried into effect, no reason exists for supposing that for many years to come any additional expense will be required for lighting this great highway.

17. The accompanying Table exhibits at a glance the several Light-houses already in existence, or recommended to be erected, and also the particular Colonies by which the expense of maintenance is proposed to be wholly or partially defrayed.

18. In recommending the adoption of catoptric lights, the Commissioners have not lost sight of the advantages, both in brilliancy of effect and in economy of management, which the dioptric principle of lighting possesses; but, from the isolated positions in which the majority of the new Lights will be placed, and the difficulty which may exist in appointing trained and efficient Light-keepers to their management, they feel hardly justified in suggesting that system, in consequence of the delicate and very complicated character of the mechanical lamps and concentric burners therein used, more particularly as the catoptric lights at present generally in use in these Colonies are proved by the evidence they have taken to be sufficiently powerful and effective.

19. In conclusion, the Commissioners suggest to their respective Governments that the agreement now entered into between the Colonies for the erection and maintenance of the Australian Light-houses should be embodied in a Legislative enactment, and made binding upon the Governments of the several Colonies for a period of ten years.

W. CHAMP, *Chairman and Commissioner for Tasmania.*

H. H. BROWNE, *Commissioner for New South Wales.*

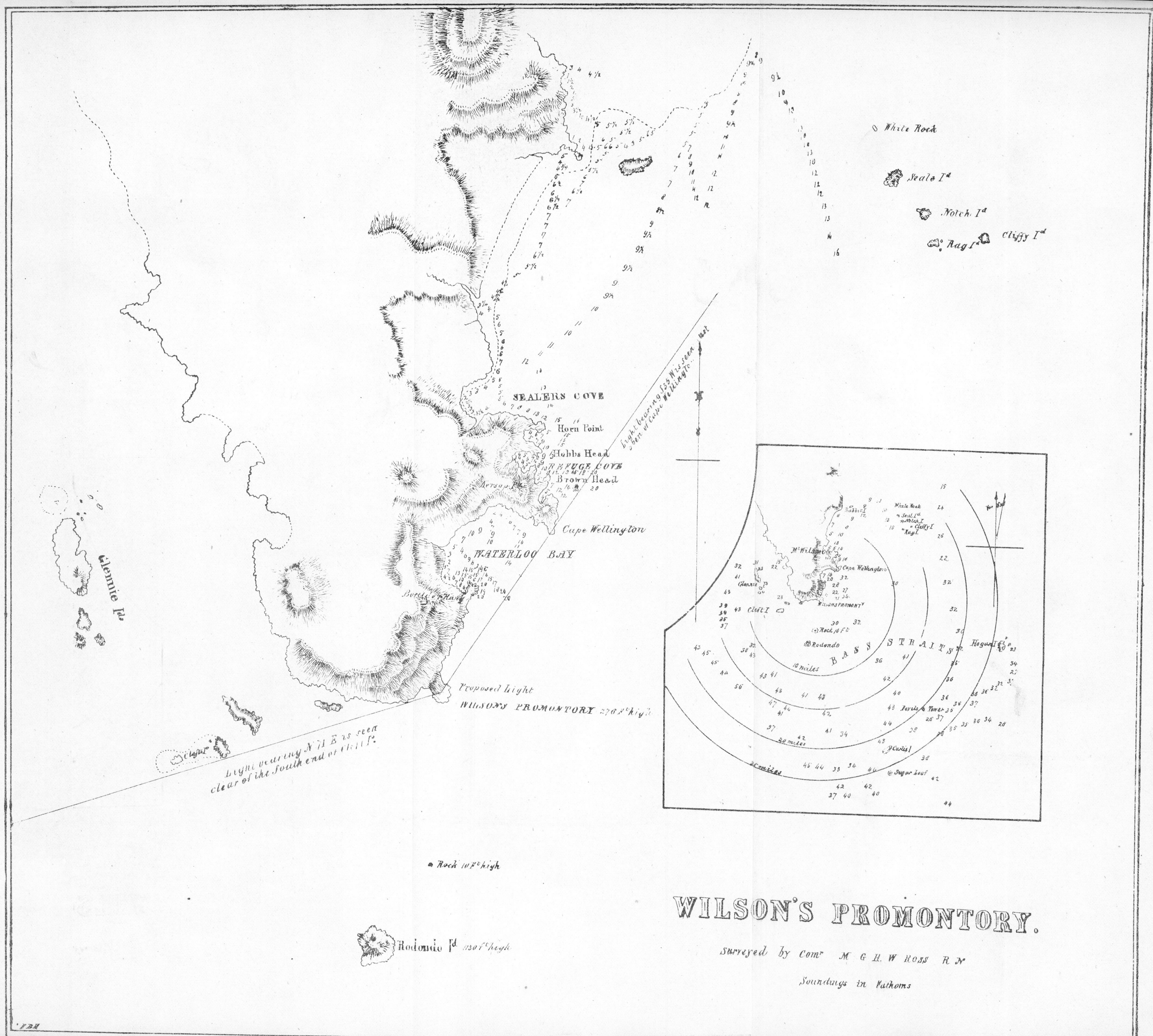
J. H. KAY, *Commander R.N., Commissioner for Victoria.*

B. DOUGLAS, *Commissioner for South Australia.*

*Melbourne, 21st August, 1856.*







# WILSON'S PROMONTORY.

Surveyed by Comr M. G. H. W. ROSS R.N.

Soundings in Fathoms

Rock 10 ft high

Light bearing N 1 E is seen clear of the South end of the I.

Proposed Light  
WILSON'S PROMONTORY 270 ft high

SEALERS COVE

Horn Point

Hubbs Head

Brown Head

SEALERS BAY

Cape Wellington

WATERLOO BAY

Butterfly I.

Clemie I.

White Rock

Seale I.

Notch I.

Rag I. Cliff I.

BASS STRAIT

10 miles

20 miles

30 miles

40 miles

50 miles

60 miles

70 miles

80 miles

90 miles

100 miles

110 miles

120 miles

130 miles

140 miles

150 miles

160 miles

170 miles

180 miles

190 miles

200 miles

210 miles

220 miles

230 miles

240 miles

250 miles

260 miles

270 miles

280 miles

290 miles

300 miles

310 miles

320 miles

330 miles

340 miles

350 miles

360 miles

370 miles

380 miles

390 miles

400 miles

410 miles

420 miles

430 miles

440 miles

450 miles

460 miles

470 miles

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940 miles

950 miles

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1000 miles

[ Appendix B. ]



1855.

VICTORIA.

LIGHT-HOUSE ON KING'S ISLAND.

*LAI*D upon THE COUNCIL TABLE by THE CHIEF SECRETARY by command of HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, and ordered by THE COUNCIL to be printed, 28TH NOVEMBER, 1855.

R E P O R T

*Of the Board appointed by His Excellency SIR CHARLES HOTHAM, K.C.B., Governor of Victoria, to examine and report as to the Necessity of a Light-house being erected on King's Island, and the Site best adapted for that Purpose.*

Members of the Board.

COMMANDER ROSS, R.N., *Chairman.*

JAMES RUSDEN, *Esq.*, R.N.

W. H. BURGOYNE, *Esq.*, *Clerk of Works Colonial Engineers' Department.*

I. AS TO THE NECESSITY OF A LIGHT-HOUSE BEING ERECTED ON KING'S ISLAND.

A cursory glance at its dangerous and rocky shores, with the position it occupies at the entrance of Bass's Straits,—its proximity to the coast of Victoria,—the strong current sweeping towards its shores under the influence of a westerly gale, (*found to be a prevailing wind*),—and the disastrous shipwrecks that have occurred on its coast,—but too strongly point to the vast boon the erection of a Lighthouse would confer on the mercantile interests of Victoria and the neighbouring Colonies.

A beacon light on King's Island, if seen only at a moderate distance, would warn the mariner of his close proximity to a dangerous coast, where no harbour offers even a temporary shelter, and would avert a calamity which has too often occurred along the western shores of this Island by its timely warning.

II. THE BEST POSITION FOR THE PROPOSED LIGHT-HOUSE.

A careful examination of the northern portion of the Island and the adjoining New Year Islets has induced us to decide that the north end of King's Island is unquestionably the best site for a Light-house; and a reference to the accompanying plan will give a weight to this decision, conveying as it does more tangibly the results of our observations, (the position is tinted yellow thereon), and from the spot selected the sea horizon is visible around twenty-one points of the compass, even at an altitude of only six feet above the present surface of the ridge,—consequently the Light, when erected, will embrace within its circle a still greater range of the compass, while at the same time it will be distinctly seen over the New Year Islands. Its usefulness will also be further extended by its proximity from the site selected to those dangerous shoals lying off the north end of the Island, the Navarine and the Harbingers.



### III. AS TO THE HEIGHT OF THE LIGHT ABOVE THE SEA, AND THE DISTANCE IT SHOULD BE SEEN.

The site selected for the proposed Light-house has been found by observation to have an altitude of 171 feet above the sea level, and is on that part of the Mount Wickham Ridge running down to the North Cape which has been cleared of the dense scrub by some recent bush fire, and lies about a quarter of a mile from the beach.

Mount Wickham by these same observations has been found to be only 312 feet above the level of the sea instead of 595 feet as shown on the chart, and by comparison is doubtless the highest point of the Island.

The lantern should be elevated at least 300 feet above high-water mark ; it should be a fixed light in contradistinction to that on Cape Otway, and of sufficient power to be seen on a clear night at least twenty-five miles.

Ships, therefore, sailing in either direction through the Straits would have the advantage of its auxiliary aid in obscure or misty weather.

No objection can be urged to the elevated position we assign to the light, from the possibility of its being obscured temporarily by a land mist. During our survey this question was made one of special observation, with the wind scarce any two days from one quarter ; yet the highest elevation was never once obscured by fogs.

A beacon of tar barrels was burnt on New Year's Island, distant seven miles in a direct line from the site of the proposed Light-house, and was found of sufficient power to have been visible at a considerably greater distance, while at a lesser altitude than the site chosen for the Light on King's Island.

### IV. RESOURCES OF THE ISLAND, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS BUILDING MATERIALS.

Abundance of good durable stone can be easily procured within a quarter of a mile of the proposed site of the Light-house, either compact basalt or sandstone, while granite of superior quality abounds in large quantities on both of the New Year Islands, but no traces of limestone could be discovered, neither shells nor coral in sufficient quantities along the shores of the Island as a substitute.

The indigenous timber is wholly useless for building purposes, being crooked and stunted in growth, and not any one specimen we examined exceeded six inches in diameter ; it furnishes, however, a ready and abundant supply of firewood, and further, we are glad to report that good spring water is also abundant and near at hand. The positions of some of these streams are shown on the plan.

In spite, however, of these drawbacks we are of opinion that a Light-house could with ease and facility be erected of masonry, especially when stone of so durable a nature can be procured ; and we are further led to this conclusion from the necessity of a durable structure occupying the exposed site selected for the Light-house.

### V. MANNER OF INTERCOURSE WITH THE ISLAND AND FACILITIES FOR LANDING STORES.

Ineffectual attempts were made by us to land on the north and north-east coasts, but were rendered abortive by the heavy surf constantly breaking on the shore even in the finest weather, and for this purpose the *Laelia* was anchored in Disappointment Bay, but afterwards permanently, during our stay, removed to Franklin Roads, found to be a tolerably safe anchorage for small vessels ; and we have since practically ascertained that the only place where a landing can be effected is the small sandy beach close to the wreck of the *Whistler*, even here impossible with a strong north-westerly breeze.

This landing place is distant about twelve or fourteen miles from the site of the proposed Light-house ; the track we pursued to reach the spot is indicated by the red line on the plan ; part of the road lay across a heavy sandy beach, impracticable for drays even without a load. This fact, in connection with the impossibility of effecting a landing on the north coast, induced us to ascertain the practicability of forming a road inland across the flats, and small ranges behind the sand hills ; and we are satisfied that it would be a task of little difficulty, involving no great outlay, to open a good bush road sufficient for the purposes required in the conveyance of those heavy articles that would have to be landed and transported to the site of the Light-house during the progress of the works.

### VI. GENERAL REMARKS.

We deemed it our duty, before closing our survey, to ascertain the number, the nature and circumstances attending some of the most remarkable of those shipwrecks that have occurred along the western coast of King's Island during the past two years, which we have gleaned from parties resident on the Island, and sufferers from the earliest of these catastrophes.

Thus we have ascertained that, within the past eighteen months, the following vessels have been wrecked on the western shores of King's Island, viz.—ship *Brahmin*; schooner *Watervitch*; schooner *Agnes*; ship *Whistler*; brig *Maypo*; schooner *Elizabeth*;—and it is not merely a conjecture when we express our opinion that three of these calamities would, in all human probability, have been avoided had a light been erected prior to that period. These vessels, the *Brahmin*, *Maypo*, and *Whistler*, were driven on shore at night by the force of strong north-westerly gales and a current which we have ascertained to be singularly influenced by these winds.

Their commanders were ignorant of their position, yet within the orbit of that beacon, even in misty weather, had it been erected; they drifted on unsuspectingly, and in three instances adduced, not only were the vessels and cargoes lost, but they resulted also in a lamentable loss of human life.

Again we would, before closing our Report, urge the necessity of a Light-house being erected on King's Island; fragments of wrecks cover its coast, doubtless the remains of vessels missing, whose fates have never been ascertained; and we are convinced it is a measure the importance of which can only be appreciated by actual examination of the localities, and the result of this examination has convinced us that within the compass of our duties lies an earnest recommendation to Your Excellency that this great work be speedily accomplished.

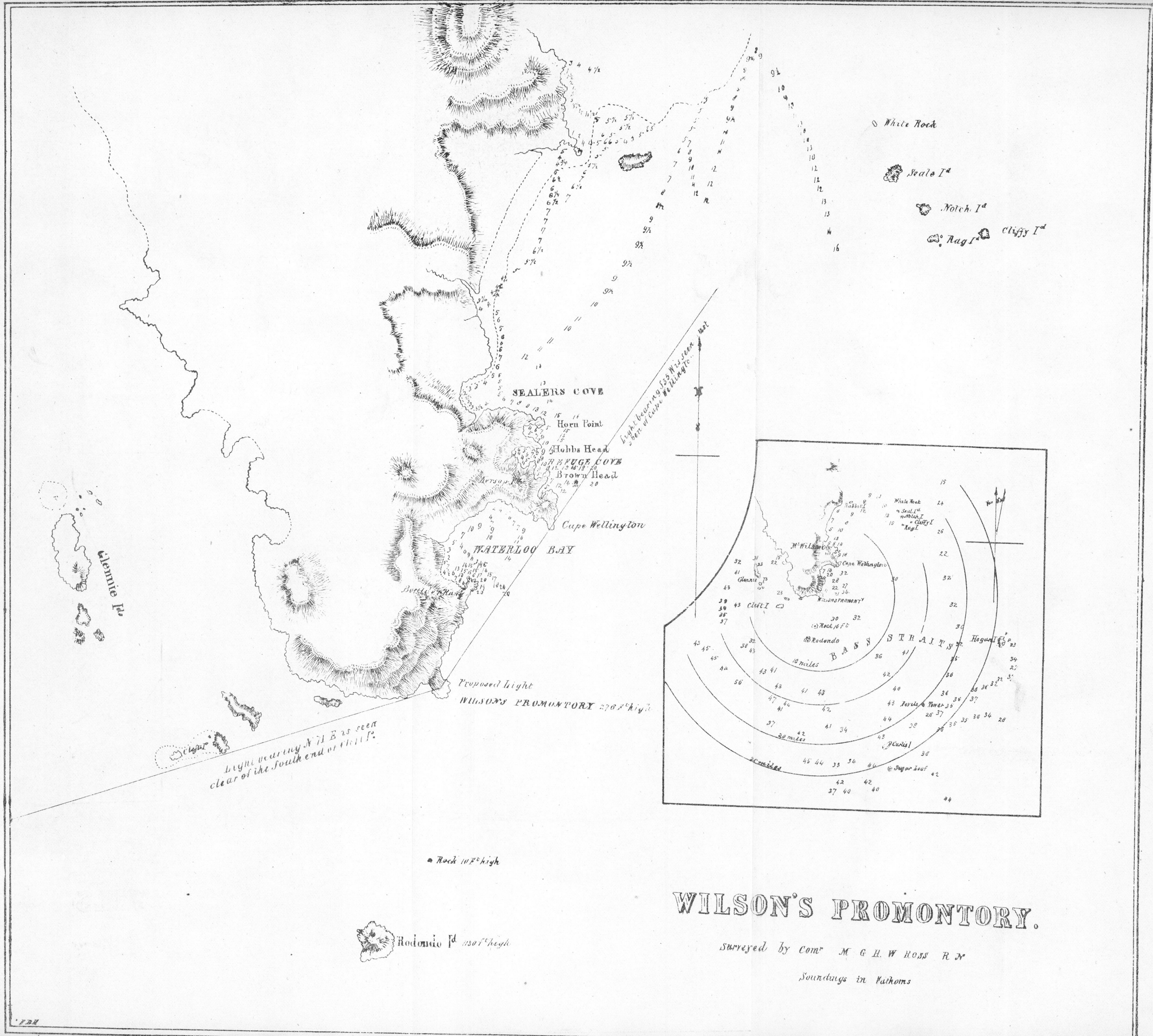
M. G. H. W. ROSS, *Commander R.N., Chairman.*

JAMES RUSDEN.

WILLIAM H. BURGOYNE.

*Melbourne, 15th September, 1855.*





# WILSON'S PROMONTORY.

Surveyed by Comr M G H W ROSS R N

Soundings in Fathoms



## [ Appendix C. ]

## AUSTRALIAN HIGH-WAY LIGHT-HOUSES.

<i>Name of the Light-house.</i>	<i>Quality of the Light.</i>	<i>By what Colony or Colonies maintained.</i>	<i>In which Colony situated.</i>	<i>Whether erected or not.</i>
Cape Borda .....	1st Class	South Australia	South Australia	In course of erection.
Cape Willoughby.....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Erected.
Cape Northumberland.....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	In course of erection.
Troubridge Shoal .....	2nd Class	Ditto	Ditto	Erected.
Cape Otway .....	1st Class	Victoria	Victoria	Ditto.
Cape Schank .....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Recommended to be erected.
Cape St. George .....	Ditto	New South Wales	New South Wales	Ditto.
Sydney Heads .....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Erected.
Moreton Island.....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	In course of erection.
Nobby's Island, Newcastle..	2nd Class	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Goose Island, Banks' Straits	1st Class	Tasmania	Tasmania	Erected.
Swan Island, ditto .....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Bruni Island.....	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Kent's Group .....	Ditto	{ New South Wales $\frac{1}{3}$ } { Victoria ..... $\frac{1}{3}$ } { Tasmania ..... $\frac{1}{3}$ }	Ditto	Ditto.
Gabo Island, Cape Howe ..	Ditto	{ New South Wales $\frac{1}{2}$ } { Victoria ..... $\frac{1}{2}$ }	Victoria	Ditto.
Wilson's Promontory ....	Ditto	{ New South Wales $\frac{1}{2}$ } { Victoria ..... $\frac{1}{2}$ }	Ditto	Recommended to be erected.
King's Island .....	Ditto	{ New South Wales $\frac{1}{4}$ } { Victoria ..... $\frac{1}{4}$ } { Tasmania ..... $\frac{1}{4}$ }	Tasmania	Ditto.