

The special report of the committee of visitors of the County Lunatic Asylum at Colney Hatch : to be taken into consideration on Thursday, 30th July / [Middlesex County Lunatic Asylum].

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Middlesex.

JULY QUARTER SESSION, 1857.

THE

SPECIAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE OF VISITORS

OF THE

County Lunatic Asylum at Colney Hatch.

To be taken into consideration on Thursday, 30th July.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY JOHN THOMAS NORRIS, ALDERSGATE-STREET.

1857.

Additional Lunatic Asylum,

COLNEY HATCH.

COMMITTEE OF VISITORS,

Appointed 15th January, 1857.

CHAS. H. COTTRELL, Esq., *Chairman.*

Henry Burslem, Esq.

Edmund Halswell, Esq.

William P. Bodkin, Esq.

Francis Healey, Esq.

Samuel Richd. Block, Esq.

John Townend, Esq.

Charles Woodward, Esq.

Joseph Baxendale, Esq.

Henry Warner, Esq.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Robt. Grosvenor, M.P.

Benjamin John Armstrong, Esq.

William Howard, Esq.

John Joseph Tanner, Esq.

Edward Thomas Busk, Esq.

George Baker, Esq.

Douglas Charles Gardiner, Esq.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY LUNATIC ASYLUM,
COLNEY HATCH.

Middlesex.

TO HER MAJESTY'S JUSTICES OF THE PEACE
FOR THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX IN GENERAL
QUARTER SESSION ASSEMBLED.

*THE SPECIAL REPORT of the COMMITTEE
OF VISITORS of the COUNTY LUNATIC
ASYLUM at Colney Hatch.*

Your Committee had hoped that it would have been in their power to present, on the last County Day, so complete an estimate of the cost of the projected repairs at Colney Hatch, as would have satisfied the Court as to how much money it would be requisite to raise for meeting the whole expense. In order to do this, however, it was necessary to restore one of the roofs, and after the cost of this single operation had been ascertained, the whole outlay could be accurately calculated. The repair of this roof had not, however, been finished on the last County Day; and your Committee thought it better to postpone a statement which would not have been so precise as they believe themselves now able to furnish to the Court. The roof of one Ward has been completely restored, under the

superintendence of Mr. Johns, the Resident Clerk of the Works ; and your Committee have the authority of Mr. Cubitt for stating that it is now perfectly secure ; and that the whole of the roofs, when the same repairs have been effected throughout, will be in a more solid condition than when first erected. The whole cost of this roof amounts to £382 ; multiplying this sum by 16, your Committee believe that they may confidently expect to do all that is required for £6,152, there being 16 roofs to undergo similar repairs. In addition to this, there will be the cost of professional advice, which it was necessary to take, under circumstances which in the first instance presented a very alarming appearance. The Court has been already informed of the communication made to the Committee by an architect of the name of Trimen, who stated that, on an accidental visit to the Asylum, he was struck by the faulty state of the roofs and buildings ; and who volunteered to communicate personally the nature of these defects, and the remedy he proposed for them. Your Committee thought it expedient, after hearing his statement, to consult the highest authority, and accordingly sent for Mr. Lewis Cubitt, to report upon the whole condition of the Asylum. Both Messrs. Trimen's and Cubitt's Reports have been already laid before the Court. Your Committee also called upon Mr. Johns, to give his opinion on the cheapest mode of remedying the evil, which report was referred to Mr. Cubitt ; Mr. Cubitt's estimate was so costly that your Committee thought it more prudent to take further advice ; and they accordingly consulted Messrs. T. Bellamy, of Charlotte Street, and George Pownall of Bloomsbury Square, upon the subject. These gentlemen, after making a most careful examination of every part of the building, as will hereafter appear, for another purpose, recommended the plan now adopted, and that it should be carried out by Mr. Johns (who originally

proposed it), with some slight modifications. It consists of an entire reconstruction of the roofs, and the substitution of a flat ceiling in the upper floors (which has been sanctioned by the Commissioners in Lunacy in the Plans for the enlargement of the Asylum), instead of the vaulted one, so as to relieve the walls from the lateral thrust now existing. The details will be found in an Appendix to this Report. This it is believed will meet the requirements of the case, at an outlay less by one-half, than the plan of Mr. Cubitt for the roofs only would have entailed, and at one-third of the cost which would have been incurred had the underpinning proposed by him been executed. A further careful examination of the walls, after the roofs had been taken off, strengthens the opinion of Messrs. Bellamy and Pownall, as well as Mr. Johns, that the under pinning is unnecessary; but should it become so hereafter, the works now executed will not interfere with it, or render it more difficult and costly. Under these circumstances the Committee believe that the Court will approve the course pursued, and vote the necessary supplies.

After the expression of opinion by the Court, and the resolution on the County Day of the last December Session, your Committee instructed Messrs. Allen to submit a case for the opinion of Counsel as to the mode of proceeding to protect the interests of the County. Mr. Atherton, the Counsel before whom the case was laid, advised that two professional men of eminence should be invited to examine the Plans, Contract, and Specification for the original building, and, after a careful inspection of the Asylum, to give Mr. Daukes, under whose superintendence it was constructed, an opportunity of making any explanations he might think proper, as to defects of design or execution, which they might discover. An interview took place between them, which led to no results. Your

Committee have subsequently instructed Messrs. Allen to inform Mr. Daukes that they are advised to proceed against him for want of reasonable skill in design and proper care and attention in superintending the works; and to state that with a view to obviate the necessity of such proceedings, your Committee were willing to receive from him any proposals he might be willing to make for an arrangement. This communication has also led to no results.

The Court having, on the County Day of the last April Session, sanctioned the Plans for the enlargement of the Asylum, prepared by Mr. Lewis Cubitt, subject to any alterations of detail which might become necessary, your Committee transmitted them to the Commissioners in Lunacy, by whom they were very minutely examined. Numerous alterations were suggested by the Architect to whom they were referred, and your Committee have eventually acquiesced in them, with some few exceptions. They have since received the sanction of the Secretary of State.

By the advice of Mr. Cubitt 16 builders selected by him, were invited to tender for the Works, which it is stipulated shall be completed by the 1st of October, 1858.

Eleven of these tenders have been received and opened this day, and your Committee regret to say, that the lowest is considerably beyond the amount already voted by the Court. This arises exclusively from the fact of the Commissioners in Lunacy having insisted upon an alteration in the site of the domestic offices, which has rendered it imperative to pull down the whole of the present offices, and rebuild them in another place on a larger scale. This increased expense, however, is in some measure compensated for by provision being made for 124 more Patients than was

contemplated when the £50,000 was voted by the Court. The Commissioners in Lunacy recommended that additional dormitories should be erected on the site originally intended for the new offices. Your Committee combated, as long and as strongly as they could, the alteration in the site of the new Kitchens, Laundries, Washhouses and Drying Ground, but ineffectually, the Commissioners having positively declined their sanction to the Plan generally, unless this part of it was carried out. Accommodation will now be obtained for 800 Patients instead of 676, as last proposed. Under these circumstances, your Committee have postponed the selection of a Contractor until the pleasure of the Court shall be known upon it. It will be, however, highly desirable that an immediate decision be come to, as the season is rapidly advancing, and the present Tenders cannot be kept open beyond a limited time. Your Committee confidently hope, therefore, that the Court will sanction the Plans as now laid before them, and enable them without delay to accept some one of the Tenders at a sum not exceeding £70,000.

The Plans as altered are submitted to the Court for confirmation.

All which is submitted, &c.

CHARLES HERBERT COTTRELL,

Chairman.

Colney Hatch,

15th July, 1857.

APPENDIX.

Copy of Report of Clerk of Works.

15th July, 1857.

To remedy the defects in the roofs of the Asylum, they have been stripped, the old pole-plate converted into a wall-plate, and a new pole-plate of larger scantling applied. New trusses have been introduced where necessary, and the old trusses strengthened by fitch-pieces secured to them in such a manner that the thrust is now received by the pole-plates, which are strapped to the ends of the purlins. Two purlins have been fixed throughout. Struts or short king-posts pass from the collar-beam up to the ridge. New ridge, hip, and valley rafters of larger scantling have been provided. New and larger angle-ties and dragging-pieces have been introduced. Extra stout common rafters have been interspersed. The whole covered with three-quarter inch boarding laid close in lieu of battens.

The brick arches of the upper galleries have been removed, and flat plaster ceilings substituted, thus removing a large amount of thrust from the supporting walls.

The brick arches, forming the entrance to the day-rooms, having been found defective, have been re-turned in cement.

(Signed)

H. JOHNS,
Clerk of the Works.

C. H. COTTRELL, Esq., Chairman.