

Brief statement as to his engagements at the House of Commons / [D.B. Reid].

Contributors

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BRIEF STATEMENT

AS TO

HIS ENGAGEMENTS

AT THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY

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HONORARY MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL ACADEMY OF ST PETERSBURGH ;

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE HUNTERIAN MEDICAL SOCIETY ;

FORMERLY

CONDUCTOR OF THE CLASSES OF PRACTICAL CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH ;

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTS FOR SCOTLAND ; AND

SENIOR PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY.

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MDCCCXXXIX.

CONTENTS.

I. BRIEF STATEMENT,	Page 1
II. STATEMENT OF SERVICES NOT REMUNERATED,	6
III. TERMS OF AGREEMENT,	8
IV. CERTIFICATES AS TO THE RESULT OF DR REID'S EXPERIMENTS,	10
V. VI. & VII. LITHOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS OF EXPERIMENTAL VENTILATING APARTMENTS, AND OF DR REID'S PREMISES.	

BRIEF STATEMENT.

Dr D. B. REID having hitherto been paid only one-half of the sum recommended about two years ago by the Right Honourable Lord DUNCANNON and the Board at the Office of Woods and Forests, and considering that the remainder of that sum would not be withheld except from some misapprehension which he cannot trace, has thought it incumbent upon him to refer to the terms of agreement, and the circumstances connected with it, in order to facilitate any inquiry which the peculiarities of his case may appear to justify.

This statement has now been rendered imperatively necessary on his part, in consequence of the non-payment of his claims having deprived him of those means which he considers he was entitled to calculate upon, at a time when his attention to the business of the House of Commons most seriously interrupted, and severely injured, for upwards of two successive years, all his professional occupations, excepting his public classes. Nor can he omit to notice, that, should there be any farther delay, this must prove ruinous to him, exactly in proportion to the time and attention which he devoted to the practical investigation of problems which had not previously been solved, and to his anxiety that no labour, expense, nor exertion on his part, should be spared in insuring the success of the experiments confided to his care by the Executive, after the recommendation of the Committee on Acoustics and Ventilation.

Dr Reid humbly submits, and feels confident, that any examination into his case will prove the following circumstances :

I. That it was an essential part of his agreement that, besides being paid during his attendance in London in carrying on the alterations under his direction, the labour and expense he had previously incurred specifically in reference to the House of Commons, was to be taken into consideration, if he realized the views he held out ; while, if he failed, he was to get no compensation.

II. That the undertaking upon which he entered was intended for the advantage of the public, as well as in reference to the present House of Commons.

III. That the alterations founded on his views have worked well, though Dr Reid has not yet been called upon to take those observations, and to conclude the arrangements, which would put them on the most effective footing.

IV. That he has been moderate in his expectations, and has urged no remuneration for the value of his plans, though, as a matter of justice, he is entitled to this,

claiming merely the payment of what is considered due for labour and expense alone by that very Board which communicated to him the order to proceed, and the terms upon which he was to act. Nor could he bring better proof of the understanding upon which he was engaged, than that which is afforded in the recommendation of Lord Duncannon and the Board, who have thus afforded the strongest evidence that could be adduced as to their interpretation of that letter of agreement which Sir Benjamin Stephenson sent to Dr Reid.

V. That the nature of the undertaking was altogether peculiar. The very appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons on Acoustics and Ventilation, gave abundant evidence, if any were wanting, as to the uncertainty of the practice. But many circumstances having directed his attention to this question, and having followed up his views at great pecuniary expense, as well as of time and labour, it will be a severe case if the Treasury adopt measures so deeply injurious to him, while all the peculiarities of his views and plans are made known on every side to the public, by papers, lithographs, &c., published and sold under the direction of Government, but without any benefit to the author.

VI. That Dr Reid agreed to take one guinea less per day while engaged in London, than his usual charge either in Scotland or England, when occupied at a distance from his establishment in Edinburgh, where, from the very nature of his profession, his absence is always attended with loss; and that this reduction was agreed to under the impression that he was to be remunerated for the success of his plans, if they should give satisfaction.

VII. That he has never on any occasion neglected the business of the House of Commons, though he was constantly under the necessity, in consequence, of declining numerous engagements which he was offered. Among others, he lost upwards of L.100 by refusing to undertake an investigation he was called upon to enter by Mr Campbell, whose letter is appended; and his publishers, Messrs Maclachlan, Stewart and Co., booksellers, can shew that he has incurred still greater loss by the delay in the publication of different works with which he was engaged.

VIII. That the experimental researches he made upon his own respiration, as well as the general nature of the undertaking to which these led, subjected him to many oppressive experiments.

IX. That the experimental apartments constructed at Edinburgh have been freely opened to all who took an interest in Ventilation, &c., and have been visited by numerous individuals from all parts of the kingdom, while he has always explained minutely all the details of his plans to those who wished for more minute information.

*MEMORANDUM from Messrs MACLACHLAN, STEWART & Co., the publishers of DR REID'S Elements of Practical Chemistry, the Third Edition of which was delayed by DR REID'S engagements at the House of Commons.**

Edinburgh, 13th November 1837.

We hereby certify, that, during the last two years, we have frequently urged upon Dr B. Reid the necessity of arranging a New Edition of his Elements of Practical Chemistry, to prevent loss to himself and us, as well as to his pupils.

(Signed) MACLACHLAN & STEWART.

MEMORANDUM from S. Campbell, Esq. S.S. C.

47 York Place, Edinburgh,

16th November 1837.

DEAR SIR,

In April last, I remember I called for you, accompanied by some other gentlemen interested in the matter, and requested that you would undertake professionally to make certain chemical experiments, with a view to a Jury Trial then about to take place at Glasgow (*Collins v. Macdonald*, and *M'Kay and Others*), and that you would attend at the trial as a witness to prove the result of such experiments; but that you declined to do so, assigning as your reason that your time was then almost wholly occupied in making experiments for the House of Commons, and that you were then in daily expectation of receiving notice from Lord Duncannon to proceed immediately to London in regard to that business. I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

SIMON CAMPBELL.

Dr D. B. REID. Edinburgh.

Dr Reid considers it unnecessary to adduce further evidence of the various professional engagements he declined, &c., while engaged in his experiments on Ventilation. He will be ready to bring forward any more minute details that may be required, and also any evidence that may be desired as to the necessity of specific investigations, such as he made, before the arrangements introduced in the House of Commons could have been adopted.

It may be proper to mention, that he omits entirely all the expenses he incurred in prosecuting these subjects as branches of general science, before and after he was examined by the Committee on Acoustics and Ventilation, having confined himself solely to what was required for the peculiar arrangements adopted in a chamber such as the House of Commons.

* This work was delayed till April 1839.

STATEMENT OF SERVICES NOT REMUNERATED, WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF THE PARTIAL PAYMENT REFERRED TO IN IX.

I. In 1835, after the Report of the Committee on Acoustics and Ventilation, and the recommendation of the Right Honourable the Speaker, and the Chairman of that Committee, Dr Reid declined all new engagements, that he might be in readiness to conduct any alterations he might be called upon to execute at the House of Commons. In particular, he declined Two Courses of Popular Lectures, which he was requested to undertake at that time.

II. After that period, and more particularly in February, March, April, May, June, and July 1836, acting upon the consideration that the failure in previous attempts to ventilate the House of Commons had arisen, from the subject not having been investigated experimentally, by which alone precise data can be obtained, Dr Reid devoted every portion of his time, excepting when occupied with his classes, to the investigation of this subject, and also to details connected with the Acoustic arrangements, in a large experimental apartment, *constructed for that purpose alone*. The experiments on ventilation were made with one hundred individuals; when crowded, two hundred and thirty-four have been present.

III. In November and December 1836, and in January 1837, he was daily occupied in experimenting in the Model-room, which was his guide in what he continued to direct at London, and in making the necessary arrangements for the carpet, for the communication of heat, &c., except when engaged with his public classes.

IV. In May, June, and July 1837, Dr Reid more particularly declined all engagements except his classes, that he might be in readiness to attend at any period during the summer session, according to instructions from Lord Duncannon. In one case alone which he declined (in reference to a Jury Trial), the agent, Mr Campbell, paid another professional person upwards of L.100, who was recommended by Dr Reid when he declined.

V. In the beginning of May 1837, when he was in London on his own account, he devoted the principal part of his time to the state of the ventilation, to the neglect of other business, when he found that his attention was required at the House of Commons.

VI. In December 1837, he was called abruptly to London while in the midst of engagements, in leaving which he incurred considerable loss, and for which he received no compensation, though he was paid for his attendance.

VII. In 1838, with the concurrence of the Board, Mr E. M. Clarke was appointed to take some preliminary observations in respect to the ventilating arrangements which Dr Reid was to complete. He kept himself disengaged for this purpose during spring; but receiving no orders to attend in London, he went there at his own expense, and in May put the water apparatus in action, under the sanction of the Speaker and Lord Duncannon.

VIII. During the two last Sessions viz. 1837 and 1837-8, Letters and Reports, detailing the effect of the Ventilating Apparatus, were constantly forwarded to Dr Reid from the House of Commons, the consideration of which, and correspondence in regard to them, occupied a considerable portion of his time and attention during the whole of that period. These Reports are still continued, though they do not now involve that labour and attention which they formerly required. He may also refer particularly to the time he was engaged in writing the pamphlet distributed to the Members through the Vote-office in 1837; and the reply to Lord Duncannon in March 1838, which has been published for general sale, though for neither of these has any thing been awarded him.

IX. The only payment Dr Reid has received, (besides his allowance of L.4, 4s. per day while in London, which is less by one guinea per day than his usual charge when similarly engaged out of Edinburgh, whether in England or Scotland), has been the sum of L.500. But he has shewn, by certificates in the possession of the Treasury, that the erection of the Experimental Room, &c. cost upwards of L.400; the amount of this, and the explanation printed for the Members of the House of Commons, being together L.467, 17s.; without any charge for the numerous and expensive experiments he had undertaken before he was sent for by the Committee on Acoustics and Ventilation. Thus, with the exception of his allowance while in London for time, which might have been more profitably employed at home, he has received no remuneration except the above L.500, although he has suffered a heavy pecuniary loss in the expenditure he was obliged to incur, with the view of ensuring the success of so important an experiment, in the engagements he was under the necessity of declining, and in the constant and unavoidable interruption of his usual professional occupations.

NOTE.—Dr Reid begs to repeat, that the Experimental Room was built solely for the purpose of establishing the principles, and investigating the details, on which the ventilation of the *House of Commons* ought to be conducted; and that it interfered so inconveniently with the business of his Class-room, by occupying the only spare ground attached to it, where experiments in the open air could be performed, that he has lately had to make new arrangements to provide against this deficiency.

EXTRACTS SHEWING TERMS OF AGREEMENT.

- I. Extract from Dr REID's First Letter, written after his first conversation with Mr SPEARMAN, in reference to his remuneration.

24th August 1836.

" At the same time, I avail myself of your suggestion that I should write and mention my own views on this point to the Treasury, and beg accordingly to submit, that I should be paid professionally at present for my time and attendance (including travelling expenses); and farther, in the event of my system of ventilation, and of acoustic arrangements, giving satisfaction, that a farther allowance to me shall be taken into consideration by the Treasury, as the system I have recommended has been founded upon a very extensive series of observations and experiments, made in all the principal towns in Great Britain, as well as in the open air, on water, and under every variety of circumstance; while I have at the same time verified the practical application of the principles I had adopted by the construction of an apartment in which they are illustrated,—an experiment which cannot but be considered as expensive for a single individual to undertake.

" I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant,

(Signed) D. B. REID.

A. SPEARMAN, Esq. Treasury, London.

- II. Another letter having been substituted for that containing the above extract, (after communicating with Mr SPEARMAN), in which Dr REID adopted the recommendation given to him at the Treasury, that he should trust to the Government taking all the circumstances into consideration if his experiments should give satisfaction, the preceding part of his letter, drawn out in unison with his previous conversation with Mr SPEARMAN was altered as follows; and in this extract, it will be seen that Dr REID still looked to his previous expenses and labour being taken into consideration.

" London, August 25. 1836.

" As to any remuneration further than for my professional attendance at present, I leave that entirely in the hands of Government, hoping that, if my plans shall be considered as satisfactory as has been represented, it will not be forgotten that my system of acoustics and ventilation has been founded upon a very expensive series of experiments and observations, which have occupied my attention for years.

" I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant,

(Signed) " D. B. REID.

" A. SPEARMAN, Esq. Treasury, London."

III. The following extract from the Letter of Agreement, contains the passage to which he immediately objected :—

Extract from a Letter from Sir Benjamin Stephenson, date 13th Sept., 1836.

“ I have also to inform you, in reference to your letter of the 25th ultimo, addressed to Mr Spearman of the Treasury, upon the subject of the remuneration to be made to you, for superintending the proposed alterations in the ventilation, &c. of the House of Commons, that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty’s Treasury will not object to your being paid at the rate stated in your letter, above referred to, as a remuneration in full for the works you are now to superintend under the directions of this Board, it being understood that you were remunerated at that rate in your ordinary occupation in Scotland; and, requesting you to furnish this Board with an account of your travelling expences, I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

“ B. STEPHENSON.”

“ Dr REID, &c. &c. &c.”

The preceding letter, not being in unison with the terms Dr R. suggested, though it states that the rate he proposed was agreed to, the concluding remarks appearing to exclude the consideration of Dr Reid’s previous expences, &c., he waited, therefore, upon Sir Benjamin Stephenson, and obtained a satisfactory explanation. Dr Reid then considered himself entitled to view this matter in the light expressed in the next extract, No. IV., and regarding it as important that this should be placed on record, introduced the subject in the next letter he had occasion to address to the Commissioners of Woods, &c., referring particularly to the result of that conversation, and the view he accordingly would continue to act upon.

IV. Extract of a Letter of Dr D. B. REID, dated 7th October 1836; addressed to the Commissioners of Woods, &c., and referring to his communication with Sir BENJAMIN STEPHENSON as to the expression “ payment in full” in the preceding extract, the day after he received it.

“ In concluding this letter, I take this opportunity of mentioning what I stated to Sir Benjamin Stephenson, the day after I received the order to proceed, viz. that I presume the expression ‘ payment in full,’ which occurs in the communication containing the order, refers solely to my time and labour in superintending the present alterations; as, in a previous letter addressed to Mr Spearman, I have mentioned that I have asked for no remuneration for the application of my plans, expensive as they have been to me in bringing them to their present condition, and that I

look for none, unless the House, after giving them a fair trial, shall consider them of sufficient importance to take this matter into consideration.

I have the honor, &c. &c.

(Signed) D. B. REID."

To this no reply was ever sent, and Dr R. accordingly contends that he is fully justified in adhering to the views expressed by Sir Benjamin Stephenson, as to the bearing of the terms he employed in his communication.

VI. CERTIFICATES IN REFERENCE TO THE ALTERATIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FROM BENJAMIN HAWES, Esq. M. P., Chairman of the Committee on Acoustics and Ventilation, to Dr D. B. REID.

MY DEAR SIR,

Lambeth, May 5. 1838.

"In reply to your note, asking me, Whether as a matter of justice, independent of your agreement, you are entitled to have your expenses (attending the erection and completion of the Ventilating Apparatus) taken into consideration, I will only say that I think very great injustice would be done to you unless your services generally are very liberally considered.

"There are very few who know more of the labour, anxiety, and expense which you underwent, or of the responsibility which you incurred (which I always objected to) than I do.

"The result, however, has been perfectly successful; and I should think very few, if any, Members would be found to deny the very great advantage which has followed your system of ventilation.

"Moreover, it is a result which will and was intended to benefit the country generally, and that should be considered; because after the publicity given to your plans, any person can adopt them, without any advantage to yourself.

"I assure you I feel that no charge you have made, nor any remuneration you are likely to receive, ever justly measures the service you have rendered, or the risk and expenses you have incurred.

"I am, my dear Sir, very truly yours,

"B. HAWES."

In another letter Mr Hawes states, "You have facilitated public business, and prolonged the lives of public men."

From the Right Honourable the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER to Dr B. REID.

Downing Street, May 6. 1837.

“ I feel much satisfaction in being able to congratulate you on the result of your alterations in the House of Commons. The experience we have had in the new House, both in the present spring weather and in the winter, enables me to give the result of my own experience. I think your success in ventilation is complete, and the temperature is the most delightful I have ever felt, and the freshness of the air is kept up most completely.

“ I consider that the hearing in the House is also greatly improved.

“ Believe me, my dear Sir, very truly and faithfully yours,

“ T. SPRING RICE.”

Extract of a Letter from the Right Honourable BARON SUDELEY (formerly HANBURY TRACEY, Esq., M. P.), the Chairman of the Commissioners for the New Houses of Parliament in 1836.

“ In your attempt to improve the atmosphere of the House of Commons, you have realized not only more than my expectations, but that of its members in general.

“ When I state the fact, that I have not met with a single individual, who has not acknowledged the improvement in the ventilation of the House, I need scarcely add, that there would be no difficulty in procuring plenty of signatures to the following testimonial (if required); but considering the saving of time of much more importance, I send you the inclosed,”* “ in preference to incurring the delay it would occasion.”

* The testimonial from Members of the House of Commons, which has been lithographed and appended.

[Turn over

From the Right Honorable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Mr. B. 1837

London, 11th May 1837

I feel much satisfaction in being able to congratulate you on the result of your
attention to the House of Commons. The experiments we have had in the
House both in the present year and in the winter, enable me to give the
result of my own experience. I think your success in ventilation is complete, and
the comparative is the most delightful I have ever felt, and the result of the
fact is most complete.

"I consider that the House in the House is also greatly improved.
"Believe me, my dear Sir, very truly and faithfully yours,

W. P. RICHES

Extract of a letter from the Right Honorable the Lord George Bagenal (formerly Bagenal)
Treasury, 11th May 1837, the Chairman of the Committee for the House
of Parliament in 1837.

"In your attempt to improve the ventilation of the House of Commons, you
have effected not only a great improvement, but also a great saving in the
cost."

"When I state the fact that I have not only effected a great improvement, but
not only effected the improvement in the ventilation of the House, I need not
add that there would be no difficulty in making a similar improvement in the
lower part of the House (the Chamber), and I believe the result would be
important, I think so, that the House would be greatly improved, and the
cost would be small."

"The result of the fact is most complete."

From
MEMBERS of the HOUSE of COMMONS.
being the
Testimonials referred to in the preceding Extract.

"The undersigned Members of that house (House of Commons) have pleasure in acknowledging the comfort they have experienced from his (Dr. Reid's) mode of Ventilation; and in expressing their opinion from their practical experience of its effects that the public will derive much benefit from the introduction of his system; and from its general application."

Alcock

Mr. Cay

Landor

Stewart

Wm. Smith

R. W. Salford

E. M. Live

Ball

Musell

Palmerston

Howick

Erskine

Charles Thompson

Meppell

Thompson

Wang

~~Ed. Phillips~~

Wabouche

Thos. Dundas

Edmond Elie

~~C. S. Lewis~~

A. Banting

A. A. Cole

W. H. P. Land.

Ed. Dillwyn

Oswald H. Key.

Edmond Woodhouse

Christy Thompson.

W. W.

W. R. I. Lonsdale

George Scayson

Her. P. P. P.

Thom. J. G. B.

W. H. H. H.

Ed. P. P.

Jos. Scholfield

Ed. H. H.

G. T. H. H.

Ed. J. J.

R. B. B.

James Williams

Th. H. H.

Edward Anderson

J. Maule

C. Codrington

W. Mast

J. J. Blackburn

Robert Price

Thomas P. Dudley

Worley

George Strickland

W. Stuart

W. H. S. S.

John A. Murray

Ms. Dudley Stone

Madover

Dr. W. W. Smith

H^m Gore Langton

Herrin

W. R. Poynt

W. W. P. P.

Roelandt Koster

J. S. Poulter

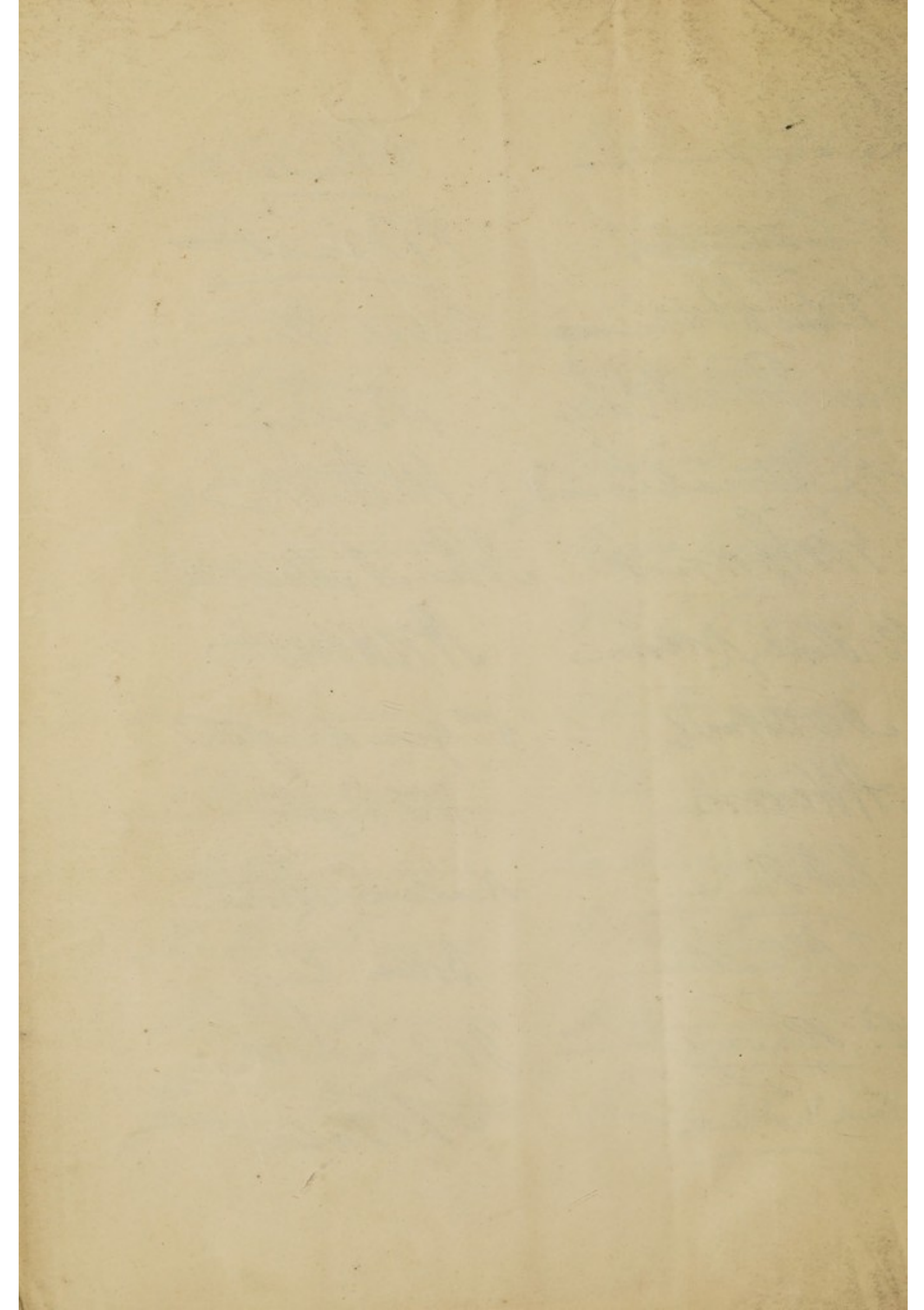
Bolton King

E. Henning

J. G. March

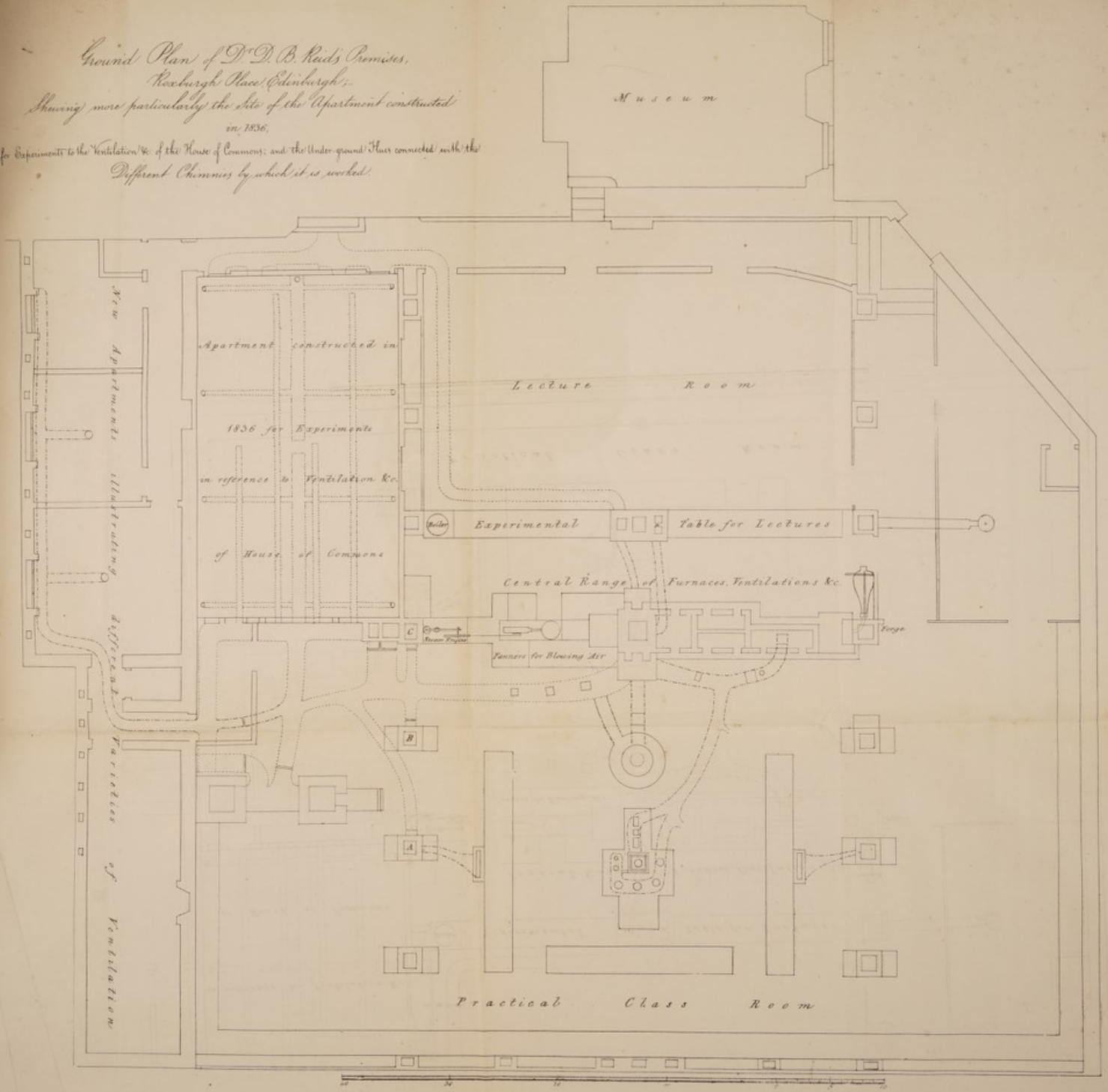
Paul M. Muen

Maule



Ground Plan of D. D. B. Reid's Premises,
 Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh;
 Showing more particularly the Site of the Apartment constructed
 in 1836,

for Experiments to the Ventilation &c. of the House of Commons; and the Under-ground Pass connected with the
 Different Chimnies by which it is worked.



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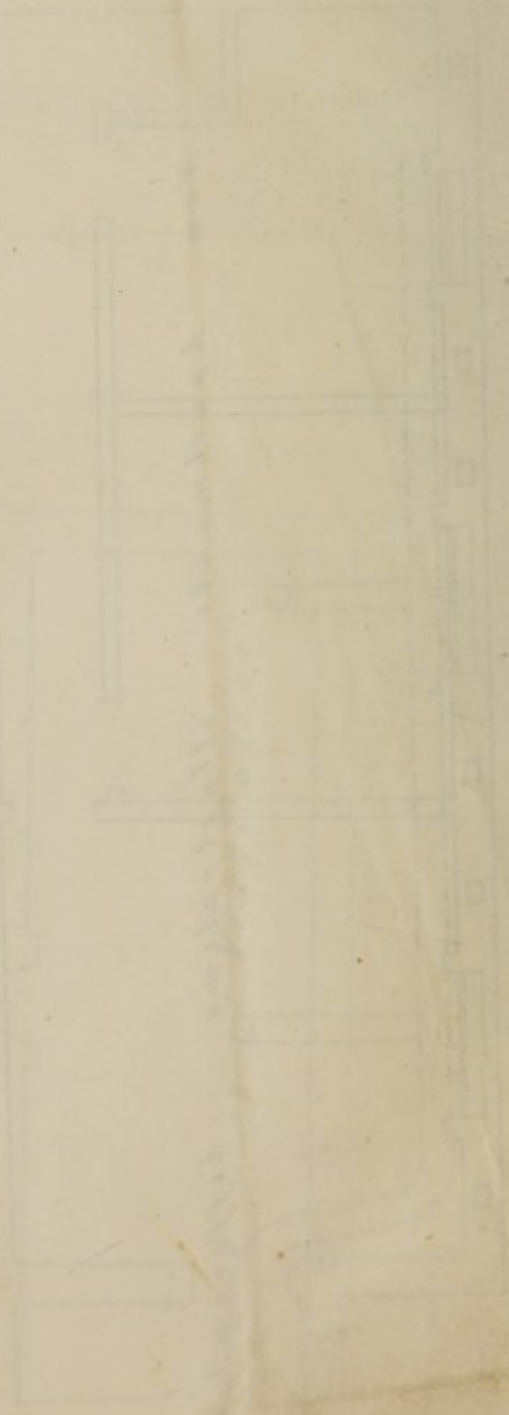
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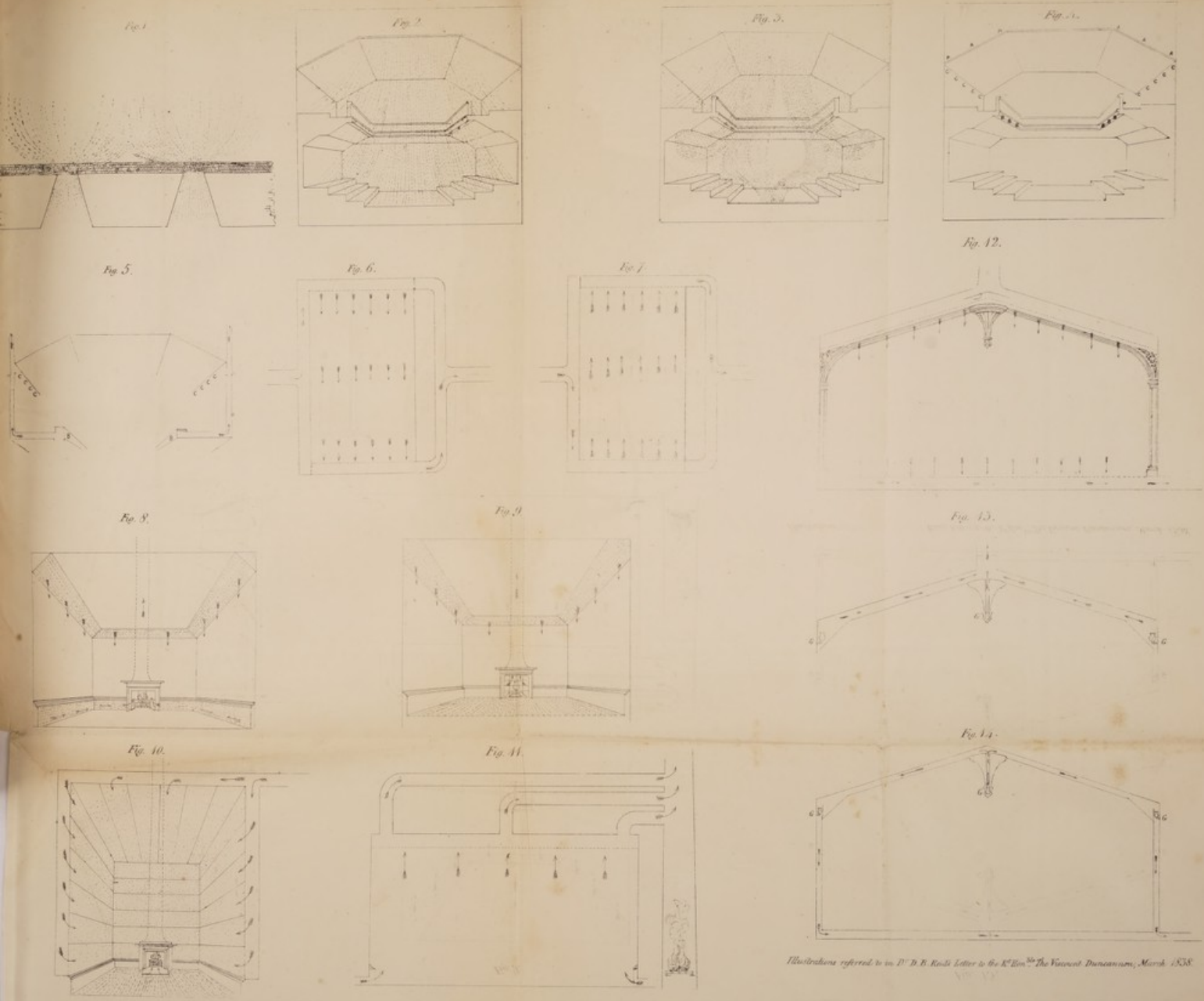
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Handwritten text, possibly a description or a list of items, located below the small text.

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or a concluding note, located at the bottom of the text block.





Illustrations referred to in D^r D. B. Reids Letter to the R^d Em^{ty} The Vice-Chancellor, March 1538

MEMORANDUM OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

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