
DRY DOCK REPORT.

MR. SPEAKER:

Your Committee since its appointment has been daily engaged in examining persons, papers, and correspondence relating to the Esquimalt Graving Dock, which they hand you herewith. The whole subject has not been exhausted, but sufficient evidence has been obtained to make clear to your Committee the leading facts in connection with the Dock, which it now begs leave to report:—

1. That the cement bought in 1874 was ordered by the Walkem Government on the recommendation of Mr. Beaven, then Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works.

2. That the cement was purchased for the Cofferdam and sea-wall of the Dock.

3. That Mr. Sproat's letters in 1874 and 1875 to the Provincial Government show that large additional quantities of cement would be required for the main Dock.

4. That Mr. Beaven's report as Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, dated 30th November, 1875, makes no reference to the facts contained in Mr. Sproat's letters relating to additional cement required for the Dock.

5. That in his report Mr. Beaven quotes from Mr. Sproat's letter of January, 1874, in a way which misled the Legislature, and conveyed the idea that all the cement for the Dock had been obtained, while he suppressed that part of the letter which contained the information that more cement would be required.

6. That no detailed estimate of the cost of the Dock was ever received from Kinipple & Morris, and that no estimate was asked for by the Government.

7. That taking into account depreciation, interest, rent, and other items fairly chargeable against the cement bought in 1874, and used in 1881-2, the first cost has been a total loss to this Province.

8. That Mr. Bennett's services as Resident Engineer for Kinipple & Morris, the Chief Engineers, terminated July, 1879, and that he has never received an appointment from the Provincial Government nor any written instructions from the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works as to his duties on the Esquimalt Graving Dock.

9. That when the letting of the main Dock contract, which required the Provincial Government to supply the contractors with all the cement, was under consideration by Messrs. Walkem, Beaven, and Bennett, Messrs. Walkem and Beaven did not communicate to Mr. Bennett the information contained in Mr. Sproat's correspondence about more cement being required. Neither did they, when discussing with him the advisability of including the cement in the contract, inform him that when Mr. Morris suggested the purchase of the cement by the Government, he suggested also that the contractors should arrange to purchase it of the Government.

10. That, shortly after the Dock contract was let, the site of the Dock was changed 43 feet 6 inches by Mr. Bennett, and that the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works was unaware until recently that such a change had been made.

11. That complaints were made from time to time by the contractors to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works of the inferior quality of cement supplied them, and that the quantity was not increased to make good the standard of strength required by the specifications.

12. That the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works never examined the book of tests kept by Mr. Bennett to see what the quality of the cement really was, nor did he enquire whether the proportions of cement had been increased as required by the specifications.

13. That the Imperial grant of £50,000 in aid of the Esquimalt Dock was conditional upon the plans and specifications drawn up by Messrs. Kinipple & Morris being approved by the Admiralty.

14. That the Dock plans and specifications before they were sent to this Province were duly examined, approved, and signed by Colonel Pasley on behalf of the Admiralty.

15. That Mr. Walkem, the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, before letting the Dock contract, made extensive alterations in the specifications, largely substituting himself for the Engineers, thus increasing his own powers and reducing their responsibilities.

16. That this substitution by Mr. Walkem of himself for the Engineers was done contrary to the advice of the Engineers as expressed in their letter of 20th January, 1876, to Mr. Beaven, in which they state that they had themselves gone as far as they safely could in that direction.

17. That before committing this Legislature to that agreement with the Dominion by assuring it that, excluding past expenditure, the cost of the Dock would fall considerably below the Imperial and Dominion subsidies, the Leader of the Government made no calculation which justified him in giving such an assurance.

18. That the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works took no steps to verify or disprove the accuracy of Mr. Bennett's estimate of 12th November last, of 4,400 tons of cement being required for the Dock until the 21st December, when he sent a telegram to Messrs. Kinipple & Morris.

19. That the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works never asked for or obtained Mr. Bennett's calculation so as to have it checked by competent persons until your Committee called for it.

20. That your Committee having discovered errors in Mr. Bennett's calculation requested him to make another, which shows an increase of about 1,000 tons.

21. That to get at the probable quantity of cement required for the construction of the Dock, your Committee obtained the following estimates from gentlemen competent to make them:—

	Tons.
F. C. Gamble, C. E.	6,010
A. S. Farwell, C. E.	6,623
Mr. Mohun, C. E.	6,063
Hon. J. W. Trutch presented figures—4 estimates ranging from.....	6,010 to 6,800
W. S. Gore, S. G.	5,421 & 6,216
W. Bennett, C. E.	6,055 & 6,517

22. That although the Legislature at its last Session only voted \$3,400 for 100 tons of cement, the Government have purchased about 1,200 tons which will cost between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

23. That most of the cement bought has been under the alleged authority contained in the "Graving Dock Act of 1879," which deals with the Dominion Grant of \$250,000, and which can only be expended on certificates of work done on the Dock under the contract, and is not available for the purchase of material.

24. That the cement purchased without authority was ordered partly by telephone and partly by telegraph.

25. That no tenders appear to have been called for for the cement bought in San Francisco, which, from tests made by Mr. Bennett, is of inferior quality to that required by the Specifications.

Your Committee is of opinion that when the magnitude of the cement requirements became known to the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, he should at once have requested one of the firm of Kinipple & Morris to come out, as their agreement calls for, to examine into matters and see what was best to be done.

That unless some large saving can be effected in the quantity of cement, by substituting natural stone for artificial, the Dock will cost from \$200,000 to one quarter of a million more than estimated by the Government last Session.

That the Government has shown a great want of business ability, and have seriously mismanaged matters in connection with the Esquimalt Dock.

That it has misled the Legislature as to the actual position of affairs, and has abused its position to expend, without authority, a large sum of money without authority from the Legislature.

That the result of the Government's mismanagement, unless checked by this Legislature, must be a heavy drain upon the finances of the Province, and moneys that would, under good management, have been available for roads and other necessary public works, will be swallowed up by the Dock, which Mr. Walkem has, on several occasions, emphatically declared would not cost the country another dollar.

27th March, 1882.

(Signed) WM. WILSON,
Chairman.