

129. What dealings had you with Mr. Brindley in connection with it at all?—Mr. Brindley used to send in a monthly report, stating the progress of the work, in order that the report might be embodied in the usual monthly report that I had to forward to Wellington, to the Engineer-in-Chief or to yourself.

130. Did Mr. Brindley sent the certificates to you?—The certificates were sent to the office, certified as to correctness by the Architect, Mr. Lawson, and forwarded by me to Wellington.

131. Did you telegraph the certificates?—I think I did.

132. In the usual way?—Yes.

133. Did you have anything whatever to do with the granting of these certificates?—Nothing whatever. As regards the amount being made up, it was a matter between the Inspector and the Architect.

134. Did you act simply as paymaster?—That was all—the channel through which the certificates passed.

135. Here is a memorandum prepared in your office of letters sent to Mr. Brindley with reference to matters in connection with Seacliff?—Yes.

136. Is that list complete?—Yes, to the best of my knowledge. I believe it is complete.

137. How many letters are there there?—Eight. [Document put in and marked "7."]

138. Are you perfectly clear on that point, that you never at any time took official cognisance of works in connection with this building?—Yes.

139. Did you ever look upon Mr. Brindley as being under your orders in connection with the building?—No, certainly not.

140. Had you charge of buildings in the Dunedin District at that time?—Yes, all the public works.

141. You heard my statement as to the operations connected with putting in the drains?—Yes.

142. Is that statement correct?—Yes.

143. The account of the various steps taken to secure the building, as related by me—is that correct?—Yes.

144. Were the works carried out in accordance with these plans?—Yes.

145. Was the strengthening carried out in accordance with these plans?—Yes.

146. When was your attention first directed to the doubt as to the foundations being according to contract?—Well, I should have to look up my dates; I cannot carry them in my memory. It was after putting in the drain at the back—some considerable time after.

147. In one of your letters you say you were asked to see Mr. Lawson in reference to this?—Yes.

148. Did you see him?—Yes.

149. What did he tell you?

*The Chairman* : In reference to what?

*Mr. Blair* : To the footings not being put in in accordance with the contract.

*Witness* : It is strictly in accordance with the letter I sent to the Engineer-in-Chief, and is with reference to a step in that portion of the building. I must have used Mr. Lawson's own words, because I reported immediately after seeing him. I am not aware of having a written communication from Mr. Lawson—it would be verbal.

150. *The Chairman*.] You repeated the conversation you had with Mr. Lawson?—The pith of it, in my report with reference to the depth of concrete. [To Mr. Lawson:] I saw you on the subject, and you gave me a reply, which I sent to Wellington.

151. *Mr. Blair*.] 9th June, 1885, is the first notice you took of it?

*Mr. Gore* : Is that Mr. Ussher's letter?

*Witness* : Yes. With reference to the remarks as to the foundation not being carried down in accordance with the contract, the Architect informs me that at the particular spot referred to there is a step which causes the deduction of some inches from the depth of the concrete shown on the plan. I do not, however, consider the matter of very great moment: a slight increase in the depth of the foundation would not affect the building on account of the soft nature of the ground here. On this subject the Architect might perhaps be called on for an opinion.

152. *Mr. Blair*.] Did you see the Architect?

153. *The Chairman*.] Before you go on reading the letter will you point out what part of the building you are alluding to—about the spot where it abuts?—It is in connection with this centre wall.

154. The ambulatory in the north wing?—Yes, at Block 2.

155. *Mr. Blair*.] Was that the statement made to you by Mr. Lawson, that there was a step there?—Yes.

156. That was his explanation of your remark?—Yes.

157. *Mr. Lawson*.] What did you understand me to mean about the step—where was it?—Well, evidently I consulted you about the matter, and pointed this portion out to you; but you said it was different from the others—that there was a step there: and I took your word for it.

158. You mean a step in front?—A step in the concrete. It made a difference in the concrete. There was no written communication between us. It is a matter of my memory against Mr. Lawson's.

159. *Mr. Blair*.] In that same letter, Mr. Ussher, would you please read out what you found in reference to the concrete?—"At No. 10 doorway we sank a shaft 2ft., and found the concrete intersected for a width of nearly 2ft. by 1ft. deep by what appeared [rough sketch shown] to be a drain, filled with sticks, brickbats, and lime mortar."

160. *Mr. Skinner*.] Where is No. 10?—The doorway in the central wall of the north ambulatory.

161. *Mr. Mountfort*.] What did you find there?—I describe it distinctly as rubbish—a mixture of everything that should not be in a wall.