

1852.

---

VICTORIA.

---

**R E P O R T**

FROM THE

**S E L E C T C O M M I T T E E**

ON THE

**G O V E R N M E N T**

**P R I N T I N G E S T A B L I S H M E N T ;**

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE, MINUTES OF  
EVIDENCE, AND APPENDIX.

---

*Laid upon the Council Table, and ordered to be printed, 12th August, 1852.*

---

Melbourne :

PRINTED BY JOHN FERRES, AT THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

---

1852.

( *Extracted from the Minutes.* )

TUESDAY, 6TH JULY, 1852.

—o—

3. GOVERNMENT PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.—Mr. Splatt moved, pursuant to Notice—That a Select Committee be appointed, to consist of the Auditor General, Mr. Miller, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Wilkinson, and the Mover, to enquire into and report upon the Printing Establishment connected with this House, with power to take evidence thereon ; with the view of considering and recommending some plan of increasing the efficiency of the Establishment, or of suggesting and recommending some other mode of getting the necessary work done.

Question—put and passed.

## R E P O R T .

---

The Select Committee appointed "to enquire into and report upon the the Printing Establishment connected with this House, with power to take evidence thereon, with the view "of considering and recommending some plan of increasing the efficiency of the Establishment, and of suggesting and recommending some other mode of getting the necessary "work done," have agreed to the following Report:—

That your Committee proceeded to view the Government Printing Establishment; and afterwards to take Evidence as to the amount of work done, and the amount capable of being done thereat.

From such Evidence it appears that the work performed at the Printing Office, has been well done and considerable in amount.

That, as appears from the evidence of Mr. Ferres and the Documents appended hereto, the Printing done at the present Office for the half-year ending 30th June, 1852, estimating the same at a very low valuation compared with present Rates charged by the various Printing Offices in the Town, amounts to £1,973 11s. 6d., while the Actual Expenses for the same period amount only to £990 18s. 5d.

That the Building in which the Office is situate, is insufficient in size and accomodation to the performance of the present, and largely increasing demands on the Office.

That a very considerable annual saving to the Colony would be effected if a suitable Building could be obtained,—but as it appears that no such Building can be rented, the only alternative that your Committee can suggest, is to build.

That the urgent necessity of a Building adapted to the wants of the Office being so evident, your Committee have considered a plan of a proposed Building, at the cost of at least Five Thousand Pounds, that has been submitted to them: and recommend that the same be adopted, and a Building in accordance therewith erected, being convinced that the Colony will be a gainer by this outlay; and public business at the same time promoted in a very great degree. And your Committee, for these reasons, recommend an Address to be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to place the requisite sum on the Estimates for the ensuing Year.

Vide Appendix,  
No. 1.

That, until the erection of a proper Building, your Committee recommend such Printing as cannot be done at the Government Printing Office, should be performed at the Private Printing Establishments in Melbourne.

Your Committee cannot conclude their Report without remarking, that in their opinion no blame is attachable to the Printing Office for delays, alleged in this Council to have taken place, in the Printing of the Returns.

WILLIAM F. SPLATT,  
Chairman.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

---

TUESDAY, JULY 13TH.

*Members Present.*

The Auditor General, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Splatt,  
Mr. Splatt called to the Chair,  
The Committee inspected the Printing Office,  
Adjourned until Tuesday, the 20th instant, at twelve o'clock.

---

TUESDAY, JULY 20TH.

*Members Present.*

Mr. Splatt in the Chair,  
The Auditor General, Mr. Murphy,  
Adjourned to twelve o'clock, Thursday, the 22nd instant.

---

THURSDAY, JULY 22ND.

*Members Present.*

Mr. Splatt in the Chair,  
The Auditor General, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Miller,  
Examined Witnesses,  
Adjourned to Thursday, 29th instant, at twelve o'clock.

---

THURSDAY, JULY 29TH.

*Members Present.*

Mr. Splatt in the Chair,  
The Auditor General, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Murphy,  
Ordered Draft Report to be prepared and submitted to the Committee at the next Meeting,  
Adjourned to Thursday, 5th August, at twelve o'clock.

---

THURSDAY, AUGUST 5TH.

*Members Present.*

Mr. Splatt in the Chair,  
The Auditor General, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Murphy,  
Report submitted and agreed to.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1852.

MEMBERS PRESENT:—Mr. Splatt, the Auditor General, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Wilkinson.

MR. SPLATT, in the Chair.

Charles Ridgway, Esq. called in, and examined.

1. *By the Chairman.*—Q. You are Assistant Clerk to the Legislative Council? A. I am. Charles Ridgway  
22nd July, 1852

2. *By the Auditor General.*—Q. You remember when the Court of Requests Bill was ordered to be printed? A. Yes, it was ordered to be printed on the 9th of July.

3. When was it sent to the printers? A. It was sent to the *Argus* office, by the Attorney General, in anticipation of the order of the House, but I don't know on what day. It was however prior to the order of the House for its printing. It was not till the order for the printing was made, that the Bill came under my observation. This order was made on the 9th July, and now the last revises of the Bill have just come to hand.

4. Q. Do you know if the *Argus* office would have to distribute the type immediately after the impressions were struck off? A. I think so. I recollect upon one occasion, when a person from that office brought a proof to the Council office, he asked if he might pull off each sheet separately, as it was finished, as he said he could not keep the type standing, because it would lose them other business. I asked him particularly if he could not keep it up in type for six weeks or a month, and he said not.

5. *By the Chairman.*—Q. What was the date at which they had the Bill? A. That I cannot say, as it was sent them by the Attorney General.

6. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. You cannot say when the Bill was sent? A. No. I only know that it was sent, previous to its being ordered by the House to be printed.

7. Q. Do you conceive that reasonable dispatch has been used in printing the Bill? A. I think so; because we have generally received sheets of it, as proofs, day after day, pretty regularly.

8. Q. Do you think that more expedition has been used in the *Argus* office, than there would have been in the Government Printing office? A. No, I think not.

9. Q. Do you think the Government Printing office, the most expeditious? A. I would not say that, but we receive a vast quantity of printing from it.

10. Still the *Argus* office did do the work? A. Yes, of printing one Bill.

11. *By the Chairman.*—Q. In giving out the Bill to be printed, did you receive the proofs in as great quantities as you would have done from the Government office; did you receive as much of this, as of similar documents from the Government office? A. I cannot say, as they come to us in different forms, the one sent sheets and the other sent slips; but then there is always much more work on hand at the latter.

12. *By Mr. Wilkinson.*—Q. Is the *Argus* office, under any contract for the printing? A. I cannot say.

13. Q. And they did not undertake, to complete the work in a certain time? A. I cannot say.

Mr. John Ferres, called in, and examined.

14. *By the Chairman.*—Q. You are the Government Printer? A. I am.

15. Q. You have laid before this Committee a Return of the value of the work done in the Government Printing Office, from the 1st January to the 30th June, in which you value the work at the rate of ten shillings per page; is this a fair valuation? A. It is; and I would remark also, that from the date of the commencement of the return, the price has not been changed, though the rate paid for wages, has changed considerably since then, being now much higher. John Ferres,  
22nd July, 1852.

16. Q. Does this valuation of ten shillings per page, include every description of work? A. It does, both plain work and tables.

17. *By the Auditor General.*—Q. And being also for every description of type? A. Yes, whether set in pica, long primer, brevier, or nonpareil.

18. *By the Chairman.*—Q. Do you consider the valuation to be less than the sum for which the work could have been done, if it had been put out? A. Yes, considerably less.

19. Q. Have you lately made any enquiry as to what would be the cost of printing in the various establishments in town? A. I have. I called at the *Argus* office, and asked at what rate they would undertake the whole of the Council printing, and I was told that they would do it at 15s. per page all round.

20. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. And I understand, that you value your work, at 10s. a page only? A. That is all.

John Ferris,  
continued,  
22nd July, 1872.

21 Q. Or at 50 per cent. under the current rate? A. Yes.

22. *By the Chairman.*—Q. Who else did you visit? A. I called on Mr. Lucas, but he had his hands full of private work, and would not undertake it. I went to the *Herald* office also, but I have received no answer from them as yet. Mr. Sayers offered to do a portion of the work, at double the rate of journeyman's wages. Journeymen now receive about 9s. for a page in long primer, and 14s. for brevier. The tabular sheets would be charged double price. Press work he would not charge for; and this would bring the price to about 18s. a page for long primer, and 28s. for brevier, or an average of 23s. or near about it, per page all round. Mr. Charlwood has plenty of work, and would not undertake any more. Mr. Shanley offered to do a portion at 25s. per page, in brevier or long primer.

23. *By the Auditor General.*—Q. Was it clearly understood at the *Argus* office, that the 15s. per page was to include the tabular work? A. It was; but I fancy that when the Overseer came to make his calculations, he would find that he had made too low an estimate.

24. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. In case of the Committee deciding to get the printing done at a private establishment, do you not think it would be advisable to call for tenders, for performing the work? A. It might be, but parties would find it extremely difficult to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the value of the work, because it is of so very changeable a nature. Besides, there are often very great alterations to make in Bills, and these take a very long time to do.

25. Q. But if we decide that a portion of the work shall be done out of your office, ought not tenders to be invited? A. Yes; but I do not think you would get parties to tender, unless they knew near about the amount of work they would be required to perform, and that information it would be impossible to give.

26. Q. How is it usual to proceed? A. To call for tenders for each particular kind of work.

27. Q. Don't you think that if some of these parties you have mentioned were to tender for the work, that it would be likely that they could make some reduction on the prices they have asked you? A. No, they could not make much. When it is considered, that the cost of workmen's wages as ascertained this morning is 9s., and 13s. 6d. per page; I may readily imagine that a party, who gives me in an estimate for a lower sum than these, has done so without much consideration.

28. Q. But if tenders were called for, parties would be compelled to do the work at the rate tendered for, and would be bound to execute it in time? A. I don't think you would get any party in town to bind himself as to time. I don't think any arrangements could be made for that, because the proofs were often so cut up by alterations, as to make the corrections almost equal to resetting of the type. The work also is irregular, there being more sent in some weeks than in others, and it would be impossible for a private office to keep on men enough. If I had not other matters to put the men to work on, I should not be able to keep so many hands, and to get out the Council work as quickly as I do. There is the *Government Gazette* for instance, which is often very heavy; but by having a number of men, I can put them all at once upon a work of importance, and thus get it completed.

29. *By the Chairman.*—Q. I see that the net expences of the office are £990 18s. 5d. does this amount include rent? A. It does not.

30. *By Mr. Wilkinson.*—Q. Nor the cost of paper? A. No.

31. *By the Chairman.*—Q. Would rent add materially to this? A. About £50 for the six months.

32. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. Will you explain the reason of the delay in printing the books required for keeping a record of all Grants of land, by which delay parties have been precluded from getting their Grants? A. There has been no delay in anything that I could possibly help. I have myself done all that I could; I have worked at press; at case; I have wetted paper, folded, and have done anything I could to expedite the work. The delay in the instance you allude to, was entirely owing to a want of material.

32. Q. I would now call your attention to certain Immigration Returns; at what date did you receive them? A. We received No. 1 of them on the 8th of June; from No. 2 to No. 7, on the 16th June; and from No. 8 to No. 12, on the 29th of June, or seven days after the Council had met. No. 12 also is the heaviest of the returns; and consists of ten different documents. The reason of their being all dated on the 8th of June, is because the first I received had that date. When the second lot came, they were dated the 15th, the day they were received, but at the request of Mr. Childers, we dated those also on the 8th, so as to make them uniform. I thought myself also that they ought all to be dated on one day, and as the first was in type, I dated the remainder according to it.

33. Q. What state are these Returns in now? A. Two copies were delivered to Mr. Childers on Tuesday, complete, as far as I could go with them; they, however, want the title page and index; these have not yet been given to me, or otherwise they would have been on the table of the House to-day.

34. *By the Chairman.*—Q. Have you asked for it? A. I came up to the Legislative Council Office for it this morning, and was told that it was not ready.

35. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. With whom does it lay to furnish you with these? A. It lays with the Clerk of the Council now. In the same way with the Votes and Proceedings; the delay has a few times arisen from the fact of the proofs not being returned in sufficient time.

36. Q. In that case the cause of the delay is in the Council Office? A. Yes, not in the supply of the copy, but in not sending back the proofs. The copy is received by me overnight, when I furnish a proof as often as possible, also overnight; but on one or two occasions, it has

happened that I did not get the corrected proofs back, until half-past 11 or 12 o'clock the following morning.

37. Q. Are you aware that on one occasion, members received no notice papers? A. I am aware that on one occasion the papers were not delivered until after the Council met.

38. Q. What was the cause of the delay in furnishing them? A. The proof not being returned, corrected.

39. Q. At what hour was it returned? A. I am not certain about the hour, but Mr. Fawcner happened to be present in the Printing office at the time it was received, and he then looked at his watch.

40. Q. Will you give us the history of this notice paper? A. I got the copy over night; it was set, and a proof was pulled, and sent that night to Mr. Ridgway's house, which is the plan adopted whenever practicable. This proof was not returned to me before half-past 11 or 12 o'clock the next day.

41. Q. And what time were the corrected papers sent out by you? A. A little after 3 o'clock.

42. Q. You then used all reasonable dispatch in the matter? A. Yes, I put as many hands on it, as it was possible to do.

43. Q. If you had had the proof the first thing in the morning, you would have been able to have published it in time? A. Certainly I should, or even if I had had it in the first part of the morning.

44. *By the Chairman.*—Q. What is the latest period at which you ought to receive the proofs, so as to enable you to get out the papers with regularity? A. I can scarcely tell. The notice paper may consist as it does sometimes of eight pages, and these would necessarily take longer to correct than the ordinary number.

45. Q. But what, from your experience, should you say ought to be about the time? A. If the proofs were returned to me by ten o'clock in the morning, at latest, I should then be ready to publish the papers at one o'clock.

46. *By Mr. Wilkinson.*—Q. Were the proofs, on the occasion you refer to, clean? A. No, very considerable alterations had been made in them. I may also mention here, that I do not get the originals of documents sent to me, and there is thus a double chance of errors being committed, those made by the compositor, and those by the copying clerk.

47. Q. As far as you can judge of the business of the house, do you think that you can get through with the printing? A. Yes, I have no doubt but I could, if I had only more room and more type.

48. *By Mr. Miller.*—Q. With more type, to keep matter standing? A. Exactly.

49. *By Mr. Wilkinson.*—Q. How many compositors do you now employ? A. Twelve.

50. Q. And how many pressmen? A. Four; one of these however is a lad, but he is nearly as useful as a man.

51. Q. How many presses do you keep at work? A. Four. Besides these we have one press partly up, though we have no room to work it, and there is another stowed away altogether from the same reason.

52. Q. What presses are they? A. There are two foolscap presses, one super royal, and one demy that we have in work. There is also a proof press, which we had not the advantage of last session. We have plenty of presses now, but the want of room is the great drawback, since the presses and the men are in each others way. More type is also required, so that more matter might be kept standing. I may mention here that the type lost in the Isabella Watson was of little use to our office, with the exception only of one sort—the pica.

53. Q. Do your men work overtime? A. Occasionally; but it is the cause of much dissatisfaction, men being extremely unwilling to stop after the usual time. They are at present, I may almost say, on the strike, and have sent in a memorial to me on the subject of their wages. What they wish is, that the hours of work should be reduced, and the rate of wages increased. They state, also, that at Mr. Sayers' Establishment, £3 15s. per week wages were given, whilst the hours of labor were from 8 in the morning till 6 in the evening. After such a memorial there would, no doubt, be very great unwillingness, on the part of the men, to work overtime.

54. Q. But if they were paid for it? A. No doubt they might be induced to do so.

55. Q. Have you convenience in your Office for lights? A. Yes, for candles, these are the only lights we can obtain, but gas is preferable.

56. Q. I presume you could get through with more work, if you had a system of over-hours? A. Yes, certainly.

57. Q. When you have not a proper sized press, does it not cause more work? A. I do not complain of this. The want I feel is in the Composing Department, where I want both room and men. We sent some months since to Sydney for type, and I received information that the order was about to be completed. We have not yet received it. When we received the type from London, we could not make use of it, as no cases had been ordered by my predecessor, to put the type in. An order was sent to Sydney for them, some months before, but it had not at that time been complied with.

## APPENDIX NO. I.

Government Printing Office,  
Melbourne, 20th July, 1852.

Gentlemen,

I do myself the honor, at the desire expressed to me by you on the 13th instant, to hand to you a statement of the present condition and requirements of this Establishment.

2. In the first place, I would beg respectfully to point out, that the building in which the work is performed, although perhaps the best that could be procured, cannot be considered at all adapted for the business of printing, it consists of

Three Composing Rooms,  
Three Press Rooms,  
One Folding and Drying Room,  
One Hydraulic Press Room, and  
One Room, which is occupied by the Government Printer and Accountant,

and is also a store-room for all paper in stock and printed forms.

3. The light, which is so very necessary and important to the printer, and which in my opinion should come from the roof, is in the present building defective.

4. The system at present in operation of the Printer and Accountant reading proofs in the midst of continual interruption is inconvenient and unsatisfactory, and clearly proves the necessity for another apartment for the purpose.

5. In its mechanical branch, the Office is very far from perfect or complete, there being, at the date of my entering upon the duties of the Office, only one fount of type for me to commence work with; it is, however, to be remarked that a quantity of Type has since arrived from London and Sydney, but in consequence of no cases having been ordered to put it into, it remained for a considerable period unavailable; steps have since been taken and orders transmitted to London and Sydney to strengthen the fount now in use, and for various materials required to complete the deficiencies in previous orders.

6. In concluding this portion of my statement, I would observe that I have been labouring under a great disadvantage, from the fact of a well selected assortment of materials not having been made when the Establishment was founded.

7. I would now beg leave to suggest to you that a building should be provided, to consist of

15 x 25	6 feet.	15 x 19
30 x 25		20 x 19
40 x 25		50 x 25
15 x 25		15 x 25

One Composing Room . . . . .	50 x 25 wide.
One Press Room . . . . .	40 x 25 „
One Folding and Drying Room . . . . .	30 x 25 „
One Room for Printer and Reader . . . . .	15 x 25 „
One Room for Accountant. . . . .	15 x 19 „
One Store Room for Paper . . . . .	20 x 19 „
One ditto for Materials . . . . .	15 x 25 „
One Wetting Room . . . . .	15 x 25 „

The work at present required to be done could not be performed in a building of less dimensions than these in a satisfactory or workmanlike manner; it is therefore scarcely necessary to add that the present building is insufficient for the purpose.

8. In conclusion, I would remark that the building should be on the ground floor, and be lighted from the roof, as I am persuaded from experience that a light from the roof is preferable to a side light for a printing office.

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. FERRES.

To the Select Committee on the  
Government Printing Establishment.



APPENDIX NO. II.

A RETURN of the Valuation of the Printing performed at the Government Printing Office, during the period from the 1st January to the 30th June, 1852.

DEPARTMENTS, &c.	Valuation of Printing.		
	£	s.	d.
Colonial Secretary . . . . .	75	15	0
,,    Land Branch . . . . .	116	5	0
	192	0	0
Colonial Treasurer . . . . .	21	10	0
Auditor General . . . . .	21	12	6
Legislative Council . . . . .	143	0	0
Commissioners of Crown Lands . . . . .	3	4	0
,,    Gold Districts . . . . .	605	14	0
Customs. . . . .	34	10	0
Colonial Architect . . . . .	1	6	0
Post Office . . . . .	226	18	0
Harbour Master . . . . .	8	0	0
Immigration . . . . .	33	0	0
Clerk of Stores . . . . .	12	18	0
Coroner . . . . .	3	18	0
Lunatic Asylum . . . . .	0	10	0
Denominational School Board . . . . .	8	0	0
Gaol, Melbourne . . . . .	8	0	0
,,    Geelong . . . . .	1	8	0
Colonial Surgeon . . . . .	0	10	0
Printing Establishment . . . . .	7	7	0
Administration of Justice . . . . .	65	0	0
Forms for General Use . . . . .	261	16	0
Government Gazette, at 10s. per page. . . . .	313	10	0
	1973	11	6

(Signed) J. FERRES.

Melbourne, 22nd July, 1852.

The expenses of the Government Printing Office from the 1st January to the 30th June, 1852, amount to £1267 7s. 4d. The Revenue derived from Poundkeepers' and other advertisements, and the sale of "Government Gazettes," &c., &c., during the same period, being £376 8s. 11d., it would appear that the actual expenses amount to £990 18s. 5d.

About 673 reams of paper have been used, the value of which is not included in the valuation of the Printing.

NOTE.—In this amount is included wages paid to a Carpenter for the manufacture of many articles of furniture, &c., which will not again be required.

J. FERRES.

Melbourne, 22nd July, 1852.