

1915.

VICTORIA.



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# PROGRESS REPORT

FROM THE

# ROYAL COMMISSION

ON

# FRUIT, VEGETABLES, AND JAM.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

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GEORGE V., *by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.*

TO our trusty and well-beloved THE HONORABLE GEORGE MICHAEL PRENDERGAST, *M.L.A.*; EDMOND JOHN HOGAN, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; WILLIAM STEPHEN KEAST, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; JOHN DAVIDSON MITCHELL, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; JAMES ROUGET, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; OSWALD ROBINSON SNOWBALL, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; and EDWARD COUGHLAN WARDE, *Esquire, M.L.A.*

GREETING :

WHEREAS the Governor of our State of Victoria with the advice of the Executive Council thereof has deemed it expedient that a Commission shall forthwith issue to inquire into, report, and make such recommendations as may be deemed desirable upon the production, packing, marketing, preservation, distribution, cold and other storage, and wholesale and retail prices of fruit and vegetables : NOW KNOW YE that WE reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability have constituted and appointed and do by these presents constitute and appoint you GEORGE MICHAEL PRENDERGAST, EDMOND JOHN HOGAN, WILLIAM STEPHEN KEAST, JOHN DAVIDSON MITCHELL, JAMES ROUGET, OSWALD ROBINSON SNOWBALL, and EDWARD COUGHLAN WARDE to be OUR COMMISSIONERS for the purposes aforesaid : AND WE do by these presents give and grant unto you or any three or more of you full power and authority to call before you such person or persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this OUR COMMISSION and inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever. AND WE will and command that this OUR COMMISSION shall continue in full force and virtue and that you our said Commissioners or any three or more of you shall and may from time to time and at any place or places proceed in execution thereof and of every matter and thing therein contained from time to time by adjournment : AND WE do hereby appoint our trusty and well-beloved GEORGE MICHAEL PRENDERGAST to be Chairman of you our said Commissioners. AND FURTHER direct that you do with as little delay as possible report to us under your hands and seals your opinions resulting from the said Inquiry.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent and the Seal of our said State to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS our trusty and well-beloved THE HONORABLE SIR ARTHUR LYULPH STANLEY, *Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia, &c., &c., at Melbourne in our said State, the Tenth day of February, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen, and in the fifth year of our reign.*

A. L. STANLEY.

By His Excellency's Command,  
J. MURRAY.

Entered on record by me in Register of Patents Book No. 24, Page 426, this Tenth day of February, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

W. A. CALLAWAY,  
Under-Secretary.

GEORGE V., *by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.*

TO our trusty and well-beloved The Honorable GEORGE MICHAEL PRENDERGAST, *M.L.A.*; EDMOND JOHN HOGAN, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; WILLIAM STEPHEN KEAST, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; JOHN DAVIDSON MITCHELL, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; JAMES ROUGET, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; OSWALD ROBINSON SNOWBALL, *Esquire, M.L.A.*; and EDWARD COUGHLAN WARDE, *Esquire, M.L.A.*

GREETING :

WHEREAS by a Commission dated the Tenth day of February, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen, and in the sixth year of our reign, entered and recorded in the Register of Patents Book number 24, page 426, we did constitute and appoint you GEORGE MICHAEL PRENDERGAST, EDMOND JOHN HOGAN, WILLIAM STEPHEN KEAST, JOHN DAVIDSON MITCHELL, JAMES ROUGET, OSWALD ROBINSON SNOWBALL, and EDWARD COUGHLAN WARDE to be our Commissioners for the purpose of inquiring into, reporting, and making such recommendations as might be deemed desirable upon the production, packing, marketing, preservation, distribution, cold and other storage, and wholesale and retail prices of fruit and vegetables : AND WHEREAS the Governor of our State of Victoria, with the advice of the Executive Council thereof, has deemed it desirable to widen the scope of the said Commission to include other matters hereinafter set out : NOW BE IT KNOWN THAT WE DO BY THESE PRESENTS EXTEND the said Commission, and do hereby ordain and direct that you shall under the extended powers hereby given also inquire into, report, and make such recommendations as may be deemed desirable in respect of the matters following (that is to say) :—

*Into the concerns of the fruit and vegetable industries in Victoria, including more particularly the businesses of and profits earned, made, or forborne prices paid or refused, agreements come to, understandings sanctioned, methods adopted, and practices followed by growers, traders, manufacturers, and others in our said State pecuniarily interested in the production, packing, marketing, sale, preservation, making into and the marketing or distribution of jam, and cold and other storage of fruit and vegetables, either individually or either in Victoria or elsewhere in association or combination with a member or members of some or others of the above class or classes, or with some other member or members of a like class ;*

*and our said Commission shall be read and construed as if the same had included the additional matters above set out, which Commission we hereby ratify and confirm as extended by these Presents.*

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent and the Seal of our said State to be hereunto affixed.

(L.S.) WITNESS our trusty and well-beloved THE HONORABLE SIR ARTHUR LYULPH STANLEY, *Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia, &c., &c., &c., at Melbourne, in our said State, the Fifteenth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen, and in the sixth year of our reign.*

A. L. STANLEY.

By His Excellency's Command,  
J. MURRAY.

Entered on record by me in the Register of Patents Book 28, Page 432, this Fifteenth day of June, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

W. A. CALLAWAY.

# PROGRESS REPORT.

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To His Excellency the Honorable Sir ARTHUR LYULPH STANLEY, Knight  
Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St.  
George, Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies in  
the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

1. We, your Commissioners, appointed to inquire into, report, and make such recommendations as may be deemed desirable upon the production, packing, marketing, distribution, preservation, cold and other storage, and wholesale and retail prices of fruit and vegetables, and with extended powers as set out in Your Excellency's further commission, dated the 15th June, 1915, consider it desirable to submit an immediate Report upon the subject of the Queen Victoria Market, Melbourne.

2. The question of market accommodation is now, and has for some time been, occupying the minds of those concerned, and we feel that no time should be lost in presenting to you our views. We are moved to this course because the extension of our commission will necessarily postpone for a little time the presentation of our general Report.

3. One of the first acts of your Commissioners was to pay an early Saturday morning visit to Queen Victoria Market. The hours from 2.30 a.m. to 6 a.m. were occupied in a thorough inspection of existing conditions and in obtaining first-hand information. The facts presented to us condemned the market as insanitary and incommodious. Horse refuse was lying in many stands, and produce, in some instances, was actually exposed to the dirt, which was further spread by being carried on the boots of sellers and buyers.

4. It needed no other testimony than actual sight to indicate that no precaution under existing conditions could prevent the pollution of food intended for human consumption, the space available being wholly inadequate to provide proper accommodation.

5. The subsequent evidence of growers and dealers only confirmed what we saw, while, at the same time, it proved that our one morning's experience was only a fair sample of what went on all the year round.

6. We visited markets in Adelaide and Sydney, but in only one—the Municipal Retail Market in Adelaide—were horses not allowed to stand amongst the produce. The other markets in these cities, some of which are privately owned, presented no notable features of improvement upon our own effete Queen Victoria Market, with the exception that in one of the Adelaide markets and in the Sydney Municipal Market raised stands, although not invariably used, were provided for fruit and vegetables, which, with us, are placed upon the ground.

7. There is a consensus of opinion that producers should have a separate portion of the Market set apart for their use, and that Commission Agents and other dealers be similarly and separately provided for.

8. Expert opinion, and evidence based upon the experience of those directly concerned, agree that the whole Market should be extended and remodelled. The necessity for extension is emphasised by the present overcrowding of the streets by vehicles, and by stands for which market charges are made by the City Council, in spite of the fact that accommodation for the latter is available in the Market proper, and permanent buildings are erected on an area intended for market purposes.

9. From the evidence it appeared that many growers favoured the South Melbourne site, although the majority approved of the present Queen Victoria Market as being central and suitable, provided it was enlarged and remodelled. It is also generally urged that it should be enlarged by the inclusion of the whole of the remaining portion of the "Old Cemetery." Some years ago a section of the burial ground was acquired for market purposes, so that any objections which could have been urged had then to be overcome. Natural sentiment, of course, must be considered in so sacred a matter, but instances will readily occur where cemeteries have been removed from centres of population with great advantage to the pursuits of the living. A notable Australian example, in addition to the extension of the Queen Victoria Market, was the Devonshire-street Cemetery, Sydney, removed to make room for the Central railway station.

10. Increased space would facilitate railway connexion, which is undoubtedly very desirable, as the requirements of growers beyond 20 miles of Melbourne could by this means be also efficiently served, and the Market consequently improved. In any case, we think it advisable that produce in bulk for markets should be delivered by the Railway Department to the precise place to which it is consigned. It may be pointed out that the population of municipalities within a 20-mile radius of Melbourne is 397,000 on the north and 311,000 on the south side of the river.

11. The Queen Victoria Market, as now built, was never intended to be permanent. It was erected thirty-two years ago, and, beyond one insufficient enlargement, it remains the same to-day as then. Making all allowances for difficulties existing, we consider that the City Council might have achieved much more in the way of improvement. As the Market is constructed and conducted, it is congested, unclean, unhealthy, and unsatisfactory to producers, wholesale and retail dealers, and the public, and we are of opinion in respect to this that the administration has failed. We found a strong feeling that the management should be placed under a carefully constituted representative Board.

12. In view of the foregoing conclusions, we recommend:—

1. That the Queen Victoria Market site be retained for the purposes of a Metropolitan Market, and that it be extended by the inclusion of the remaining portion of the "Old Cemetery";
2. That the Market be rebuilt upon modern lines to provide—
  - (a) that producers shall have a separate portion of the Market set apart for them ;
  - (b) that commission and other agents be similarly and separately accommodated ;
  - (c) that stalls should be built for horses, which should be separated from fruit, vegetables, and other produce ;
  - (d) that stands be erected for the display of such produce in order to prevent its pollution ;
3. That the market be connected by rail; failing that, by a street railway or other service controlled by the Railway Department, and so organized as to save any unnecessary handling or delay ;

4. That, pending the passage of a Greater Melbourne Bill, the management of the Market be supplemented by an Advisory Committee of three, representative of the varying interests operating in the Market, to be elected by those concerned, or, failing that, appointed by the Governor in Council. Such a body could exercise a continuous and vigilant oversight of their interests, and, in their representations and recommendation of improvements, would carry weight with the Melbourne City Council.

Your Commissioners have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

G. M. PRENDERGAST. (L.S.)

E. J. HOGAN. (L.S.)

J. D. MITCHELL. (L.S.)

JAMES ROUGET. (L.S.)

O. R. SNOWBALL. (L.S.)

E. C. WARDE. (L.S.)

I am of opinion that the South Melbourne site would be more convenient and suitable to producers and consumers than the Queen Victoria Market. Therefore, I can only concur in the retention of the Queen Victoria Market if it proves impracticable to provide the promised new market at South Melbourne. Otherwise I agree with the Report.

W. S. KEAST. (L.S.)

JOHN B. CASTLEAU,  
Secretary.

State Parliament House,  
Melbourne, 1st July, 1915.