

*Mr. Blair* : Read it, please.

*Mr. Lawson* : Yes, I will do so. It is true that Mr. Brindley made many details, but he did not do so at my request. All the details in connection with the building were my own, and I have them in my office now. I knew Mr. Brindley to be a good assistant, and he was of far more use to me than an ordinary inspector throughout the whole of the building; and I was thankful to him for his assistance, and he knows that. He never once complained to me that he was kept at work at or copying my details, nor has he ever asked me for any consideration for having done so; neither has he at any time made any claim in connection therewith, or mentioned them, that I know of or remember. I again emphatically deny that I ever asked him to take my place on the building, or in any way to prepare details. As a matter of fact, I always keep the preparation of my details in my own hands. I should thank no inspector who prepared my details; indeed, I would not look on the building as my own were he to do so. Of course, I know that Mr. Brindley did prepare details from time to time, but I repeat that they were not done at my request. I will only say that I am grateful to him for what he did do, and always said so to him. Now, as to the bricks. We have been told that great complaints were made about the bricks. I know that there was great slaughter amongst them; that kiln after kiln was condemned, and the bricks cast aside. It is also true, as has been stated by Mr. Gore, that he wrote to me asking to be allowed to pick the bricks out of the kilns, he alleging that there were plenty of good bricks thrown away along with the bad ones. But, in order to secure that no bad bricks should be smuggled in along with the good ones, I condemned the lot. That is a fact, and Mr. Brindley will bear me out in that statement. The whole lot were condemned unreservedly, and Mr. Brindley's letters, if the Commissioners read them, will show that. It may be said that Mr. Brindley and I consented to what may be called inferior work rather than stop the works; but that was towards the end of the building, when there was a great hurry to get possession of the building. Mr. Brindley knows—and here his letters will also bear me out—that rather than stop the building we allowed some bricks that were not so good as the others that had been generally used. But we only allowed these bricks to be used for a very little while, and they were put in under Mr. Brindley's superintendence and care. That was the nearest approach to anything like bad material that was permitted to go into Seaciff building from the pinnacle of the tower to the deepest depth of the foundation. Another matter that had been referred to was the gables; and here was the nearest point of there being any friction between Mr. Brindley and myself during the whole building. As a matter of fact, the gable was erected 9in. thick by Mr. Gore against Mr. Brindley's protest. Well, I will not say that he protested, but he formally complained to me that Mr. Gore was doing the work after he had found fault with it, and that Mr. Gore would not do it for him as he wanted it done. I replied to that complaint to the effect that I left Mr. Gore and him to settle the matter between themselves; that I would not come up this time to settle it, but left him (Mr. Brindley) to exercise his authority. Apparently they managed to settle it, for it was put in and charged by Mr. Gore as an extra. I, however, decided that it was a necessary part of the building, and would not allow it as an extra. I thought 9in. in the position where it was was sufficient; and there it remained. Now, as to the concrete. I omitted to refer to that part of it which was objected to by Mr. Brindley and condemned. As a matter of fact, Mr. Brindley and I condemned it together; we both insisted that it should come out; and out it came, so far as I was concerned. Of course, I did not stay there to see it taken out. There is another part of Mr. Blair's statement that I must refer to. In one passage there is a very peculiar insinuation regarding the position I assumed towards Mr. Brindley in connection with the building. Mr. Blair as much as infers that I recommended Mr. Brindley to side with Mr. Gore, and pass bad work. I repudiate such an insinuation.

*Mr. Blair* : I do not remember anything of the sort.

*Mr. Lawson* : I will prove that you said so. You said in your statement that I recommended Mr. Brindley to work amicably with the Contractor, and the construction you put on that phrase of mine was that I had recommended Mr. Brindley to work amicably with the Contractor—in other words, to pass bad work. I will read you a letter which refers to this very matter: "30th October, 1882.—*Re* Seaciff Lunatic Asylum.—Mr. A. T. Brindley.—Dear Sir,—Referring to your late reports of the 5th to the 28th October, inclusive, I have to reply as under: First, as to stone packing: I could not write more distinctly than I have already done in my letter of the 13th December, 1881, to which I now refer you. Second, as to lathing of ambulatory and plaster finish: As this is clearly within the specifications it must be done, and I have already told Mr. Gore this. Third, as to raking-out of joints previous to cementing: When I saw you lately this, it was agreed, would not in general be an advantage, so that it need not be insisted on. Fourth, as to gas: I have forwarded, through the Engineer-in-Chief, particulars for same; and he informs me that the matter is under consideration as between ordinary gas and electric lighting. Fifth: The hot-water arrangements have now been agreed upon, providing for constant supply from a central boiler, instead of saddle-boilers at each bath, as per original specification (this I have told you of already). This work includes one 'multitubular boiler, 14ft. long by 3ft. 8in. diameter, with Lemmon plates; six furnace 21ft. 3½in., tubes, smoke-box, furnace-doors, bars and bearers, safety and check valves, blow-off cock, water-gauge and test-cock, and pressure gauge, built in complete; five forty-gallon steam-jacketed steam copper pans; valves and complete; four 1½in. copper steam coils; four 300-gallon cisterns, lined with 8lb. lead; four small cold-water cisterns, with ball-cocks and ventilating-pipes and waste complete; six steam-traps; all requisite steam-pipes and valves, and all hot, cold, and waste-pipes required.' This, I think, disposes of all the points referred to in your letters, and I hope that you will be able to get all that is necessary attended to satisfactorily. And I do not see why you should not work amicably with the Contractor also. I always get contractors to do as I wish best by treating them in a quiet, and friendly, and firm manner; and I would not resort to any extreme measures, such as delaying or lessening certificates, unless for very important and serious reasons.—Yours truly, R. A. LAWSON." That has always been my position.