

1262. For how many years, can you say?—For twenty years, and over that.

1263. Do you remember working for me on any other building, except the asylum contract, which has shown signs of cracking?—No.

1264. You have been employed on a good many buildings for me?—Yes, and I have always given satisfaction to you, and I have always got satisfaction from you.

1265. You have not been working for me for the last three years?—No; it must be four years this month since I left Seacliff.

1266. *The Chairman.*] Did I understand you to say that you were working at Seacliff when the foundations were put in?—I was while portions of them were put in.

1267. Did you see the trenches cut at the north end for the concrete?—Some of them. A portion of them was in when I went there.

1268. Can you point out any particular place where you saw the foundations put in?—I think it was somewhere about this part of the north wall [indicating on plan]. There was a good portion of it in when I went there.

1269. These were open when you went there. Do you recollect if there was any water standing in them?—It was in the winter time, and there was water about, of course.

1270. To what depth was it?—Two or three inches in some parts. It was a sloppy sort of place.

1271. Did you only notice the water standing in the foundations, or in two or three places, or was it general?—The water had to be taken out of the foundations before the stuff went in.

1272. Was the water standing more or less at the end of the building?—Well, it was round and about.

1273. Then the ground was of a wet nature?—It was.

1274. *Mr. Skinner.*] Did you work on the corner of the north wing?—Yes.

1275. Can you speak as to the bond in the brickwork?—Yes, sir.

1276. Was it good?—Yes.

1277. Were you at work at the western corner of Block L?—Yes. I mean that the men under me were working there.

1278. Do you know anything of the bond in that corner?—I cannot say exactly.

1279. Can you say whether it was bonded with the corner wall or was toothed into it?—I cannot certainly say how it was. There was a toothing here and a toothing there [indicating on the plan].

1280. As to the north wall and this southern portion of it, do you know anything about the bond there?—I cannot say. It is some time ago, you see.

1281. Can you say whether it was toothed in occasionally—every 3ft.?—It was carried up regularly.

1282. You think so?—I am almost certain of it.

1283. If you turn up Drawing No. 4, you will find that the walls are marked 18in., 14in., 24in., and 2ft. 6in. in the section of the central block. How do you produce these measurements with your bricks? What are the sizes of your bricks?—I had nothing to do with the central block. There was another foreman there.

1284. *Mr. Mountfort.*] Now, as to the back wall, or what is called the back wall, which we have been talking about all this time. You say that the earth behind it was not sloped back?—It was left raggedy.

1285. It was left raggedy all along like that?—Yes.

1286. If you had seen the concrete working off from the earth, how could you say that the earth was raggedy?—I suppose, by the rain dripping on to it the raggedy earth or rough stuff would fall down.

1287. How far down was it, or was it close into the wall?—About 18in. or 2ft.

1288. What I want to know is, to what height the earth at the back stood up raggedy?—From 18in. to 2ft., but I cannot say to a few inches. It is a long time ago.

1289. You never saw any inclination of that raggedy earth to slip in?—I did not notice any.

1290. You saw it was wet ground about there?—It was damp.

1291. But you said it was wet?—I say it was damp there.

1292. Was there nothing to keep that water off—no erection or embankment in front?—It was a sort of surface-water.

1293. It was not a sort of pond?—Oh, no!

WALTER JOHN GORE sworn and examined.

1294. *Mr. Gore.*] You have been engaged in building during a number of years, have you not—Yes, since I was fourteen years of age; and I am now thirty-one years.

1295. Have you had charge of any large works?—Yes, I had sole charge of the Timaru High School.

1296. What was the amount of that contract?—About £5,800.

1297. Were you in charge at Seacliff?—I was in charge there from the 4th January, 1882, until the building was finished.

1298. Can you tell us how the concrete was put in? Just relate it in your own way. I prefer that a witness should give his evidence in his own way, rather than I should lead him. Will you please tell the Commissioners how the concrete was mixed and put in the trenches?—First of all, I had a large board laid down—what is called a concrete-mixin gboard—for keeping the concrete clear from the earth. The quantities were 5 to 1—that is to say, 5 of metal and shingle—Shag River shingle, mixed with the metal. There was 5 of combined shingle and metal to 1 of cement. It was turned once dry and once wet; then turned twice before it was laid out. As to the stone packing, that was used in the whole contract. My instructions to my men were to place the packing 9in. apart. The concrete was placed in all the trenches, and then well rammed. All the concrete