

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 557.

The following Return of the Approximate Number of Fishermen employed in taking Coral and Shell from the sea adjoining the New Territory, which was laid before the Legislative Council this day, is published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th September, 1901.

RETURN OF THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF FISHERMEN EMPLOYED IN TAKING CORAL  
AND SHELL FROM THE SEA ADJOINING THE NEW TERRITORY.

Locality.	Approximate Area.	Approximate No. of Boats.	Average No. of Men on each Boat.	Total estimated No. of Men employed.
Tsin Wan.....	1½ sq. miles	18	5	90
Ni Ku Chau,..... and Ping Chau,.....	3 sq. miles	{ 20 Junks 60 Boats	18 6	360 360
Deep Bay,.....	4 sq. miles	{ 70 Junks 25 Boats	5 to 10 5	500 125
Rocky Harbour,..... Port Shelter,..... Hebe Haven,.....	7 sq. miles	{ 31 10 10	2 3 to 4 2 to 3	60 35 22
Ping Chau (in Mirs Bay),..... Knob Reef } (in Tolo Channel),..... Flat Reef } Centre Island (in Tolo Harbour),.....	.....	150	2 to 3	400

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 558.

The following Depositions taken by the Magistrate sitting as Coroner in the Enquiry into the Deaths which occurred in the Collapsed Houses in Cochrane Street, which were laid before the Legislative Council this day, are published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th September, 1901.

**Inquiry No. 20 of 1901.**

*In charge of the Case—Inspector David Douglas Cuthbert.*



HONGKONG TO WIT.

Information of witnesses severally taken and acknowledged on behalf of Our Sovereign King EDWARD the Seventh at the House known as the Police Court in Victoria, in the said Colony, on the 30th day of August in the year of Our Lord One thousand nine hundred and one, before Francis Arthur Hazeland, Esq., Gentleman, Magistrate for the said Colony.

LIU MUI declared and examined:—

I am a married woman. I lived at No. 32, Cochrane Street, third floor. The house was a family house. The house had four storeys. There were different families occupying the different floors. On the 3rd floor there were 19 people. On the night of the 14th August, at 11 p.m., the house suddenly collapsed. My husband was in the same cubicle with me. My husband was killed. My mother and two daughters were also on the same floor. They were all killed. My husband's name was Leung Sang. He was head coolie at the Ordnance.

DAVID DOUGLAS CUTHBERT sworn and examined :—

I am Inspector of Police. I was requested to make inquiries of those who were killed by the collapse of Nos. 32 and 34, Cochrane Street. Forty-three dead bodies were recovered from the ruins. I produce list of 41 persons who are missing from these two houses. There are also 3 whom I have not been able to ascertain the names of. Two of these three were visitors and the third was the husband of a woman living in the house. I am of opinion that all the 41 on this list were killed by the collapse.

GEORGE WATT sworn and examined :—

I am Police Sergeant 11. On the night of the 14th instant at 11 p.m., I was in Queen's Road at the bottom of Cochrane Street. I heard noise of something falling. I ran up the street and found that No. 32 and No. 34, Cochrane Street had collapsed and also the verandah of No. 30 had also fallen. I went up to No. 30 to get the people out. While I was there, fire broke out in No. 32. A minute or two later the fire brigade arrived and extinguished the fire.

Ho HEUNG CHI declared and examined :—

I am a draughtsman in Messrs. Palmer & Turner, Architects. On the night of the 14th August I was asleep at No. 32, Cochrane Street, second floor. In the second cubicle there was a friend of mine sleeping there. His name was Ho Sun. He was an apprentice. I was asleep and I heard a crash. Then the house collapsed.

PERCY THOMAS CRISP sworn and examined :—

I am Inspector of Buildings. On the 15th August at 9 a.m. I was called to the collapse of Nos. 32 and 34, Cochrane Street. I examined the débris and found that all the floor joists were in a sound condition. The brickwork of the top floor, which was added a year ago, seemed to be good work. I saw the red brick bonding and it was good. In my opinion the cause of the collapse was due to the faulty party wall of the old work. I found, from the part of the party wall remaining, it was quite hollow. I have no doubt this party wall was built hollow. The heavy rains soaking into the two layers of Shanghai tiles caused a very great weight to come on to the party wall, which split in two owing to its being hollow.

JOHN BELL sworn and examined :—

I am Medical Officer in Charge of the Mortuary. I produce list of the bodies received at the mortuary on 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th and 22nd August, sent by the Police from the collapsed buildings at Nos. 32 and No. 34, Cochrane Street. I have also placed on the list the cause of death.

HUGH POLLOCK TOOKER sworn and examined :—

I am Acting Assistant Director of Public Works. These two houses, Nos. 32 and 34, Cochrane Street, standing on Inland Lot No. 1 section A, were constructed, as far as we can ascertain, in the year 1878, and there appears to be no record in the office of any alteration or addition until the latter end of 1900, when plans were submitted under the Building Ordinance and notices given on prescribed form. One dated the 3rd November, 1900, is in respect of No. 32, Cochrane Street, and the other dated the 7th December, 1900, is in respect of 34, Cochrane Street. Both plans were prepared by Mr. E. M. HAZELAND, and the notice dated the 3rd November, 1900, describes the work as follows :—“To make additions and re-build cross wall, add verandah.” The notice dated the 7th December, describes the work as follows :—“Additions and re building cross wall, &c.” Both notices are signed by CHAN TSUN CHEUNG, as owner, and the addition spoken of consisted principally of another storey. They were originally 3-storied houses. These plans were scrutinized by myself, and found to be in accordance with the Building Ordinance, and were then forwarded to the Medical Officer of Health and were returned by him saying that he was satisfied they were in accordance with the Public Health Ordinance. This Ordinance (15 of 1894) provides for the height of houses in relation to the width of the street. This additional storey complied with that Ordinance. I visited the collapse on the morning of the 14th August and found that Nos. 32 and 34 had completely collapsed, and in No. 30 the front wall had fallen out, and the sites of Nos. 32 and 34 were covered with débris and also the street in front and also the balcony of No. 31, which was of iron, was considerably damaged and a quantity of débris was on the verandah. I made a careful examination of the remaining walls and of the débris. I found that the portion of party wall between 32 and 34 was badly constructed although the bricks of which it was composed were good. I mean by badly constructed that the wall was badly bonded and the heart of the wall was composed of small pieces of blue brick. The heart of the wall was hollow and was filled in with small pieces of brick. This could not be perceived except by an interior inspection of the wall. The party wall between Nos. 30 and 32 and between 34 and 36 were standing at that time and exposed to view, and it could be perceived that these walls were more or less of the same construction as the party wall between 32 and 34. After careful examination, I formed the conclusion that it would be impossible for anybody to say definitely what part of the building first collapsed. I further concluded that the mischief had been going on for some time and that the showery weather we had before the accident—hot one hour, and then a heavy shower—

would have caused considerable contraction and expansion of the material, and acting on these old walls would have considerably tended to the collapse. All the timber in the floor that I examined was sound and good and the top floor appeared to be supported on hard-wood joists. I believe, from the way the floors were lying, that the party wall between Nos. 32 and 34 was the first part of the building to collapse. The failure of this wall would have caused the floors to tumble down and the shock would have been quite sufficient to throw the front wall out. I attribute the accident generally to the bad state of the old brickwork of the whole building. The old Building Ordinance No. 8 of 1856 placed no restriction on the use of blue bricks but it required that all walls should be solidly built.

ERNEST MANNING HAZELAND sworn and examined:—

I am Civil Engineer and Architect. Some time in November and December, 1900, I was asked by Mr. Chan Tsun Cheong to prepare plans for an additional floor with verandahs to houses 30, 32 and 34, Cochrane Street. I sent one of my assistants to measure the premises up. He reported the walls were sound and plumb and thick enough to add an additional storey in compliance with the Building Ordinance and Public Health Ordinance. Plans were prepared and submitted to the Public Works Department for approval. These plans were approved by the Public Works Department and I gave the plans to the owner. I had nothing to do with carrying out the alterations and additions to these premises. I was not engaged to superintend the work. I was formerly Assistant Engineer in the Public Works Department. My principal duties while in the Public Works Department were to carry out the provisions of the Building Ordinance. If I had the least suspicion that these walls were unsound I would not have sent these plans to the Public Works Department.

HUGH POLLOCK TOOKER recalled:—

I would wish to bring to the notice of the Court that in all the cases coming before the Court of collapses, the plans were prepared by European Architects, but in each case, they said that they had no power to supervise the construction. I believe if the work had been under the supervision of a European Architect, as soon as the roof was pulled off, he would have seen the bad state of the walls and would have doubtless pointed out the necessity of re-building them. Section 76 sub-section 3 of the Building Ordinance gives the Director of Public Works or any officer deputed by him power to enter any house, building or tenement where he has reasonable grounds for believing that within any houses, building or tenement there are works being completed or carried out in contravention of this Ordinance.

Adjourned to 2.15 p.m.

F. A. HAZELAND,  
*Police Magistrate.*

30th August, 1901, at 2.15 p.m.

JOHN MITFORD ATKINSON sworn and examined:—

I am Principal Civil Medical Officer. I produce list of bodies received on the 14th and 15th August sent by the Police from the collapsed buildings at Nos. 32 and No. 34, Cochrane Street. I have also placed on the list the cause of death and the approximate age.

F. A. HAZELAND,  
*Police Magistrate.*

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 559.

The following Communication from Civil Engineers, Architects, &c., regarding Professional Supervision of Building Works, which was laid before the Legislative Council this day, is published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th September, 1901.

HONGKONG, 6th September, 1901.

To the Honourable

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

SIR,—In accordance with your letter No. 2171 dated 29th August, 1901, to Messrs. LEIGH & ORANGE, a meeting was held yesterday of the undersigned Civil Engineers, Architects and Surveyors, who represent the Firms who have been in practice for the longest period in the Colony.

It was resolved to thank you for the opportunity given to express our ideas on the subjects mentioned in Messrs. LEIGH & ORANGE's letter to you of 19th August.