

Contracts.

1843.

Lady Franklin to her sister, Mrs Semplekinson.

Hobart. Van Diemen's Land  
September 18<sup>th</sup> 1843.

My dearest Mary.

I have at last executed Captain Ross's Commission and bought for him an estate in Tasmania, at a sale of Crown (that is uncultivated) land. A few months ago, an allotment of 640 acres was put up by my Nephew neighbour Mr Clark, and knocked down to him at the upset price of 12 shillings the acre. The present upset price of land whether good or bad is 1 £ the acre, but the allotment <sup>in question</sup> had been originally put up for sale when the upset price ~~of~~ was only 12 shillings, it was therefore put up again, according to regulation, at the same price.

By a previous compact Clark not being rich enough to pay for the whole, and wanting only 240 acres, I took the remaining 400 off his hands, and not being able

to do anything better for Captain Ross, it was with the view of transferring it to him that I completed the bargain.

Capt Ross left with me 350 £ his half years salary, for the purchase of land, this has augmented a little by interest.

Thus he will perceive that I have not spent the whole of his money in the purchase but that after paying for the 400 acres at 12/- and after the expenses of the deed, and the survey, there is still a considerable remainder available for its improvement, or for any other purpose.

This I have left, as the whole was before<sup>left</sup>, in M<sup>r</sup> Durnis bank at 5 per cent interest,

His kind desire was that if possible his land should be joined to ours, - now this is effected, the same side lines which bounds our property of Huon Ferrelands at the upper end, forms his side line at the lower end of his, - Capt Ross knows the locality. There is this peculiar feature in his estate however, that a swamp

or marshy meadow extends for some portion of the river frontage, under the line of hill which continues the Ferrulands line. At the back of the swamp, this hill rises abruptly, densely timbered, but the soil is very good, as for the swamp, it is overflowed in winter by the river being then lower than the stream, though partially defended from it by a thick water line or hedge of trees and bushes. I have sent down Robert Burnett, the brother of our poor naval friend who was drowned, to survey it, and divide it into 100, & 50 acre allotments, the same as my own. There are people already wanting to purchase portions of it, or to lease it. The former I have refused, but I shall give directions before I leave that an offer may be accepted to rent 50 or 100 acres of it on these terms: A 21 years lease, the first five of which, nothing is paid, and the remaining term at ~~10/11~~ 10/11 per acre. I have no legal right to do this, nor can any Lawyer here give me one.

but I think it better the land should not be lying idle. Captain Ross can convey a power of attorney to anyone he may fix upon. **P** In a few weeks time we hope to pay a farewell visit to the spot, in order that the Bishop, may perform some of his functions there, and that we may try and get up a Church and school. There is at present nothing but my wooden chapel, but no clergyman, nor schoolmaster.

Cultivation advances rapidly, so that Capt Ross, would hardly know the place again. When I was there in November last year, there ~~were~~ on the settlement, one hundred and sixteen souls, increased since that time. If Captain Ross has never possessed four hundred acres before, in the world, which may be his case, as it was Sir John's, he will I hope feel himself now a person of some importance. The Bishop felt so much interest in the account he heard of the settlement, that he was determined to visit it as soon as possible, but I have told you

in my last letter, how we were interrupted. As he is a beautiful artist, I hope he will make me a drawing, of Capt. Ross's place, and our own, and I shall also bring Captain Ross, some ~~specimens~~<sup>specimens</sup> of the soil, and of its wild produce. a bit of wattle from his own Tasmanian estate will I think be acceptable to him.

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Sir John is the object of universal respect and of a degree of outward consideration which even exceeds that which was shewn him when Governor. Major Cotton who <sup>is one</sup> of the most gentlemanly and excellent of the officers of the Government said the other day, that he had been witness to other Governors leaving their Governments, but such a universal feeling of respect and attachment as is shewn to Sir John he had never witnessed before. I should like Mr. Fildes, to know this as well as Lord Stanley.

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Our passage money for Sir John, myself, Eleanor, Sophy, Miss Williamson, and a maid, besides the services of a man on board, who is to wait upon us, amounts to 520 £, but then we have to pay freight at 5 £ per ton, an enormous charge and which such is the quantity we have, in spite of the sale, that we expect our passage expenses, will not be defrayed by the 800 £ which is allowed.

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