

OFFICE OF VAN BRUNT & HOWE ARCHITECTS,

HENRY VAN BRUNT,
60 DEVONSHIRE STREET.
BOSTON, MASS.

FRANK M. HOWE.
BAYARD BUILDING, 1214 A. MAIN ST.
KANSAS CITY, MO.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., Jan. 13th., 18867

Wm. Brewster, Esq.,
Cambridge,
Mass.

Dear Sir:--

Inasmuch as our professional functions ceased with the transfer to Messrs. Andrews and Jacques, we beg leave to enclose herewith our account for services rendered. As a matter of convenience to you and to us, will you kindly make check payable to Mrs. Van Brunt, who will receipt for us.

We shall not cease to feel that we have a warm interest in your undertaking, and have every confidence that the hands in which it is now placed will prove in every way adequate to your needs.

We have here the studies for the Museum, and intend to develop them in accordance with your latest instructions.

Mr. Van Brunt expects to be in Cambridge in the latter part of February.

Very Truly Yours,

(With Enclosure)

Wm. Brunt & Frank M. Howe

Van Buren & Assoc

Jan. 13 - 1887

60 DEVONSHIRE STREET,

BOSTON, Mch 22^d 1887

My dear Mr Brewster,

I have had approximate estimates made by mechanics on the drawings for the museum as they stand, including excavation, foundations, concrete floor to basement, cut free stone work, brick work, pilasters & mantels (the latter \$50 apiece) plastering, roofing, slate, copper gutters & conductors, carpenter work and glass; with no furniture or shelving or galleries. The amount reported

is \$5250. The amount seems
low. It may not include painting,
which I do not see in the schedule.
It may also include wire ceiling &
plastering on cellar ceiling. It would
be safer to figure on an amount
between \$6,000 & \$6,500.

We are developing our drawings
with an open roof for museum,
lighted by 2 double dormers &
3 prize windows on ^{each} end of room;
no prize windows on side.

I started for the West on Smiley
trip, but was arrested suddenly and
turned back at Albany by a telegram

60 DEVONSHIRE STREET,

BOSTON, 188 .

announcing my mother's serious
illness. I shall remain until
her case is definitely decided.
She has recuperated wonderfully
today and I may be released to-
night. But your work will go
on and I shall review it before
it is offered for contracts.

Yours truly,

Henry Van Brunt.

Kindly indicate to C. S. & H. as Boston

Office what plumbing you require.

A. D. W.

H. Isaac Bennett

March, 22 - 1887

OFFICE OF VAN BRUNT & HOWE ARCHITECTS,

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FRANK M. HOWE.
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KANSAS CITY, Mo., April 12th, 1886

Mr. Brewster, Esq.,

Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir;

I have received from our Boston Office copies of the plans of your Museum, and with this mail send back various amendments to the same.

I think it well to suggest, however, the expediency of putting in a window in the Museum, opposite the chimney piece and under the gallery, as the spaces under the gallery need some such low light as this.

Mr. Potter is in trouble as to how to furnish hot water service for your plumbing in the Museum. This, in the absence of a hot water back and a continuous fire, as in a range, will be difficult and expensive. It might be possible to arrange a boiler with a circulation of hot water in connection with the furnace, a tank being placed in the roof space, but this would only answer for the Winter. If you are willing to spend one hundred and fifty such dollars, (\$150.00) for hot water service it can be arranged for.

Would it not be better to have some old fashioned system of heating your water on a hob grate in the Winter season and by a

small stove in the cellar in the Summer, if you require it

Your stairs and closet in the hall seem to crowd things a
good deal, but I suppose you understand your requirements, and
have conceived this fault.

I shall be in Cambridge in the course of the month (I can not
yet give an exact date at present) and shall be glad to review
your plans with you, meanwhile estimates may be obtained
drawings on essential details, and a final estimate of the
change is likely to ensue from our conference.

the same.

Very Truly Yours, I think it will be the expediency of putting

Henry Van Hook

Mr. Potter is in trouble as to how to furnish hot water
vice for your plumbing in the Museum. This, in the absence of a
hot water tank and a continuous fire, as in a range, will be ex-
pensive and expensive. It might be possible to exchange a boiler
with a circulation of hot water in connection with the furnace,
tank being placed in the roof space, but this would only answer
for the winter. If you are willing to spend one hundred and fifty
dollars, (\$150.00) for hot water service it can be arranged

*from
Henry Van Hook
Apr. 12. 1887*

Would it not be better to have some old fashioned system of
heating your water on a hot grate in the winter season and by a

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KANSAS CITY, MO.

BOSTON, *April 15* 1887

Mr. Wm Brewster.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find a note which came for you, from Mr. Van Brunt to day. I sent a notice to Mr. Phelan, the Cambridge plumber; but have just received a note from him, saying he is too busy to figure on any new work at present. Is there any other plumber you wish to figure on your work? If so please let us know at once.

Yours Respectfully

G. Wilson Potter

for Van Brunt & Howe.

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BOSTON, *May 10* 188*7*

Mr. Wm. Brewster.

Dear Sir:

Below I give
the estimates for your work
in Cam bridge.

Masons

James Fagan \$ 2,450

Wm. Hillier 2,399

Carpenters

D. W. Powers 2,800*

A. J. Currie 3,145-

Plumbers

J. O. Santry 196.

Edward Moor 195.

J. S. Phelan 205.

Taking the contractors you
seemed to have a preference
for your building will cost
\$5,404.

This seems to me
a very reasonable figure,
and I don't think we can

* Afterward increased to 3675.
Power did not understand that
he was to do better stonery, masonry or tallowing

do better than accept it.
Please let me know as soon
as possible, your decision.

Very truly yours

G. W. Gibson Potter
for Van Brunt & Howe.

at 1000 1/2
at 1000 1/2

Mar 10 57

Van Brunt & Howe

Van Brunt & Howe

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KANSAS CITY, MO.

BOSTON, May 16 1887.

Wm. Brewster Esq of

Dear Sir,

Mr. Power had the specifications to figure from which contained the items for slating, painting, & lath & plaster, but for some reason he failed to include them in his figure, for which he has signed the contract.

As it was through negligence on his part and he has already signed the contract it is possible to hold him to it. However he has figured on these items separately as follows.

Slating	# 350.
Painting	275
Lathing	250

Total to be added to
present contract \$275
Am't of original contract 2800

\$3675.

With this I forward a
new contract for you to sign
if the present figure suits
you. The remainder of the
contracts, i. e. Plumbers, & Mason's,
are correct and have five
estimates for what is called for
in the specifications.

If the contracts meet with
your approval will you
please sign them and the
specifications, & return both
as soon as possible

Yrs. very truly

W. B. Prescott

for
Van Brunt & Howe.

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BOSTON.

May 23^d 1887

My dear Mr. Brewster,
Robert Filden's opinion coincides with that which I expressed to you regarding Currie, that he is "a good sort of fellow", "not too hasty" and not fit for a first class job on a large scale, but to be trusted with such work as you have in hand. He is honest and

killing, and, under the cir-
cumstances, I wd advise
closing with him as he
pays which brings the
case within your limits, -
rather than cutting off things
which you want for the sake
of employig another man.

Shall we close with Carrie?

Yours truly

Wm. Van Dorn

May 23-87
for the letter

Wm. Van Dorn

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BAYARD BUILDING, 1214 A. MAIN ST.,
KANSAS CITY, Mo.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. Nov. 11th, 1887.

Wm. Brewster, Esq.,
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir:--

Mr. Howe, on his return from the East, informed me of all the points contained in your letter of the 7th, which I have just received.

I am not able to recall in detail the various discussions which we had regarding your building preliminary to drawing up of the contracts. I am only able to infer that the plans and specifications, which you signed, were the legitimate result of these conversations, and that your signature to the contracts justified the whole matter. I knew that a fire proof construction approximately was discussed, but the impression left upon my mind is that the question of cost controlled the conditions of structure.

I visited the building personally several times in September, but in your absence was unable to take any action towards the amendment of the construction, so far as such action might influence the cost of the building. I supposed that it was in conformity with your views. I of course regret extremely that there should have been any misunderstanding between us on this matter. Of course the building was not fire proof or of slow burning con-

struction as I saw it, and the modifications which you have made, and which Mr. Howe has described, strike me as judicious under the circumstances.

I am not disposed to shirk any part of the responsibility which I should properly bear in this or any other building under my charge. The plans and specifications formulated what I supposed was the construction agreed upon, and your signature to them seemed to confirm that supposition. My interests would be of course in favor of the better and sounder construction which has since been adopted, and I could not have adopted the wooden partitions except as the result of a mutual understanding. The wooden lift from the cellar seemed to me when I was at the building especially objectionable, and if I had felt that I had authority in the premises I would have most certainly removed it.

I have weekly reports from Mr. Prescott concerning the development of the building, and have the necessary measures to enable me to complete the detail drawings of the finish of the library, which I shall shortly forward to you for your approval.

As I saw the building in September it was built substantially in conformity with the plans and specifications, but with certain modifications in detail which you had required. I certainly have no reason to suppose that you were not conversant with the methods of construction.

The wooden partition between the Library and Museum was a

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KANSAS CITY, Mo.1887.

H.V.B. to W.B., 2nd sheet.

most obvious concession to economy. No Architect would use such a partition in such a place by choice, nor under the circumstances would he erect a lift in such a place. As for the ceiling of the cellar under the Museum: if wire lathing and plastering were not specified in the contract as a guard against the spreading of fire, this was a point apparently left to be decided later at your discretion. I have not the specification at hand, and cannot settle this point definitely.

I am distressed to find that through these misunderstandings you should have been exposed to vexatious delays and expenses, but unless there is written evidence somewhere that I agreed to make the building approximately fire proof we must rely upon the plans and specifications, as signed and forming part of the contract, as the legitimate result of all our preliminary discussions. Under the circumstances I do not see how I can be held responsible for the fact that the building is in some respects other than what you expected. I will assume with alacrity any responsibility which properly belongs to me.

Kindly inform me in what way I can further your desires. I

expect to be called to Cambridge on business in the course of a
few weeks, and I shall gladly avail myself of the opportunity
to discuss all these matters in person with you.

Very Truly Yours,

Henry David Thoreau

H. D. Thoreau
Nov. 11. 1887

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. Nov. 14th, 1887.

Wm. Brewster, Esq.,
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir:--

Referring once more to your letter of the 7th, and especially to its concluding paragraph, which seems to imply that you are not decided as to certain points, it has occurred to me to add a line or two in this manner to my letter of November 11th.

Mr. Howe informs me that he agreed with you upon the following modifications of the plan:--

The building of an 8" partition wall from cellar to roof-boarding between the Library and the Museum, enclosing and embodying the studs of the original wooden partition, which was set as required by contract; the hanging of a fire proof door in this partition between entrance hall and Museum; the building up of brick breasts to the fire places in the Museum and library; certain modifications of the truss work in the Museum occasioned by this brick work; a division partition of brick in the cellar, enclosing the furnace room; the placing of a ceiling of corrugated iron under the floor joists. He understood that these changes were satisfactory to you, and were to be carried out in the work.

They seem to me to be in all respects just and proper, and in conformity with good construction. I have instructed Mr. Prescott to obtain from the contractor an estimate of the addition of cost incurred by these changes.

In view of the economy of construction, which seemed to be such an important consideration when we were preparing the contract, I now recall that after discussing the question of mill flooring for the first floor throughout, it was finally concluded to wire lath and plaster the whole ceiling of the cellar, thus forming a shield between the basement and the principal story, to arrest the quick progress of fire originating in the lower regions, and prevent any continuous flues of inflammable material between the basement and the roof. Your order for a lift between the basement and the first story seemed therefore to me objectionable, and as I said in my letter of the 11th I should have advised its removal if I had been fortunate enough to have met you while I was in Cambridge in September.

Will you kindly send to me a statement of the height of your first tier of cases in the Museum, in which is to be set the proposed balcony in the future. It would be convenient for me to know as near as possible the height of the face of the balcony, so that in designing the chimney piece of the Museum I may bring it into conformity with this conspicuous feature of the interior.

Very Truly Yours,

Henry Hand

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KANSAS CITY, MO.

.....1887.

H.V.B. to W.B., 2nd sheet.

P.S.--The underwriters consider that wire lathing and plastering is an efficient check to the progress of fire. I am not at all sure that the addition of corrugated iron to the wire lathing and plastering is essential, but as an extra precaution it may not be inexpedient. An absolutely fire proof building being out of the question in this case I really do not know any expedient that will more effectually secure for us a reasonable slow burning construction than the provisions adopted in our original contract, provided the wire lathing and plastering to which I refer is made to form a complete shield throughout, without any openings, such as lifts to form flues for the conveyance of fire.

The additional protections, which we understand have been agreed upon between you and Mr. Howe, seem to us to secure your valuable collection still more effectually against danger from fire.

H.V.B.

Henry Van Buren

Nov. 14. 1887

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KANSAS CITY, Mo.

KANSAS CITY, Mo. Dec. 27th, 1887.

Wm. Brewster, Esq.,
Cambridge, Mass.

My dear Mr. Brewster;--

I have just returned from a visit to Boston and Cambridge. While there I made a special effort to see you, and went to Cambridge for that purpose; I regret that this effort was futile, as a personal consultation over the Museum would meet with more prompt and more definite results than can be reached by correspondence. Of course we are anxious and ready to fulfill our professional obligations to you in all respects.

I observed at the building that in addition to the building of the brick partition wall, and the brick chimneys, both of which works seem to me in every way commendable and proper to be done, in view of your desiring more fire proof construction, ~~that~~ you are preparing to have the concrete floor to the Museum; this we knew nothing about. It is needless for me to repeat that the contract and specification represent clearly my understanding of what you were prepared to pay for the Museum, and what we understood to be your necessary limitations of expense, confining the fire proofing to wire lathing and plastering in the ceiling of

the basement. All this you will see from the specification, of which we sent you a copy, at your request, some time since. The changes that you have made are all in the direction of sound construction, and are such as we would have gladly performed in the beginning.

The object of this letter is to ascertain what you understand to be our relations with you, and what is expected of us. Mr. Prescott informed us that you told him that you had no further need for his services, and Mr. Jaques reported to me, on meeting him accidentally, that he had been consulted by you with reference to the changes in the plan. This is all right of course; we have no feeling in the matter, but would be pleased to have a definite professional understanding.

I thought the building looked remarkably well.

Very Truly Yours,

Wesley Wood

H. Van Buren

Dec. 27, 1887

Carpentry & masonry —

James Fagan — \$6956.00

Mr. Currie — 6100.

W. F. Pracey — 6985.

Mr. Power — 8000.

Plumbing —

Sastry \$196.00

Pranger 237.

Moor 195.

Phelan 205

Carpentry —

Currie — 3145.

Power — 3675

Masonry

Fagan — 2450

Hillier 2399

Bellamy & Harris 2,217.00

Van Buren & House

1847

Estimates on

Museum

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FRANK M. HOWE,
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KANSAS CITY, MO.

KANSAS CITY, MO. Jan. 10th, 1888.

Wm. Brewster, Esq.,

Cambridge, Mass.

My Dear Mr. Brewster:--

I have received your favor of the 2nd inst., and it is needless for me to say how much I regret the inconveniences and delays to which you have been subjected by the misunderstanding between us in respect to fire proofing.

When my business compelled me to make my head-quarters in the West it seemed to me that in the interest of my clients it would be best for me to leave the supervision of the work in the hands of those of my draughtsmen who I left behind, and who were familiar with the details of the several works which we had in hand at the time. Mr. Prescott especially recommended himself to me for his fidelity, conscientiousness and intelligence; I of course did not anticipate that the timidity of his inexperience would have proved so serious an inconvenience to you. He had authority to decide all minor questions himself, and to communicate with me by telegraph to any extent required. I have also understood that he visited the Museum once a week, on Saturdays; there may have been one or two accidental exceptions to this.

It is well to bear in mind that some questions which depended upon you for decision had to await your return from one or two long absences, when you were beyond the reach of telegraph and the mail.

As you very properly desire to close accounts with me, the work being practically completed, I send herewith a final statement. In this account you will see I have credited you with what seems to be the proper sum in view of the misadventures of my professional relations with you. If this does not seem to you entirely just please tear up the bill and consider the account settled; the amount involved is far too small to stand in the way of the pleasant relations which I always hope to maintain with you and yours.

Very Truly Yours,

Henry Lamb Jones

H. Lamb Jones

Jan. 10 - 1888