

Home (1917) Department.
Education

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. 1362

DATED 31-10-17

[Despatch Abstract.]

Correspondence.—

Communicating to Heads of departments for information and guidance G.O. No. 2964, Revenue, dated 20th September 1917 directing the use of the endorsement form of ————— in mufassil offices whenever possible.

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Government of Madras

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2964, 20th September 1917

Correspondence

Directing the use of the endorsement form of — in mufassal offices whenever possible.

READ—the following papers :—

I

Official Memorandum No. 992-D/16-1, Revenue, dated 23rd May 1916.

A copy of paragraphs 93 and 94 of a note on "the indexed slip system of conducting, registering, titling and indexing official correspondence" by Mr. F. G. H. Anderson, M.A., I.C.S., of the Bombay Presidency, is forwarded to the Board of Revenue for favour of remarks on the suggestions contained therein.

(By order)

A. H. A. TODD,
Under Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Full Board).

ENCLOSURE

Extract of paragraphs 93 and 94 of Mr. F. G. H. Anderson's note.

93. Every word written costs a definable amount and when an unnecessary word is written many thousands of times, its actual cost to the tax-payer and to the administrator becomes rapidly appreciable.

Cost of redundancy.

94. When dealing with the public, with corporations and companies, or other distantly related branches of our own administration we must of course maintain the stereotyped forms

Style of correspondence.

of address and we cannot send them our office papers in original. But in what I call internal correspondence we must have different methods. It is entirely otiose for two Collectors or a Collector and his Assistant writing to one another ten times a day to assure each other continually that it is an honour to correspond and that each is the most obedient servant of the other. This is the full dress style of correspondence. The third-person endorsement style (returned with compliments and the opinion of the undersigned, etc.) might be called the morning dress style; but for the routine day's labour we must wear the working dress or unofficial style "A.C.—please report on this". There is the method of retaining an office copy and sending out only full dress fair copies; so that each office keeps a duplicate full set of the case. There is also the method of passing the case along in original—the universal vernacular style. For internal correspondence between officers of the district and department we should use the unofficial style and send our papers in original. The other duplicating system seems to have arisen in days when no one trusted a superior or subordinate but feared they might destroy or distort communications unless there remained an office copy to confound such devices. Also in days when communication was slow and difficult and some necessity arose of referring to a current case it was very inconvenient if all the papers had gone to another office. But now we can get a case back from Srinagar or Taticorin within a week, and anywhere within our own districts in much less time. (Moreover if we use my docket slip and index system a perusal of the slip even when no papers are in the office will serve almost all the purposes for which office copies were kept if the matter is not so old as to be out of memory). Therefore in internal correspondence half the time of our clerical staff should be saved and fair copies dispensed with and discussions conducted in original by unofficial endorsements.

II

Official Memorandum No. 992-D/16-2, Revenue, dated 30th June 1916.

In continuation of Official Memorandum No. 992-D/16-1, dated 23rd May 1916, extracts from a Secretariat note are enclosed, explaining the docket slip and index system advocated by Mr. Anderson. No spare copy of the pamphlet is available.

J. P. BEDFORD,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), with a copy of paragraphs 13-15 of the note.

ENCLOSURE

Extract of paragraphs 13 to 15 of a Secretariat notes.

13. The basis of the Bombay system is the use of docket slips for each new case. The work of an office is divided into sections or branches and these again are subdivided into "compilations" or sets of connected subjects looked after by one clerk in charge. This clerk is known as the "compilation clerk" and he is responsible for the papers relating to the subjects coming under his compilation from the moment they come into the office until the time when they are finally disposed of and handed over to the record-keeper for custody. Mr. Anderson's pamphlet does not detail the arrangements for the opening and distribution of tappal, but I infer that no general receipt register is kept and that the papers are passed directly to the several branches and made over to the compilation clerks concerned. As soon as the head of the branch has satisfied himself that a paper represents a new case, the compilation clerk goes to the record-keeper for a docket slip; the blank forms are kept in the custody of the record-keeper and bear serial numbers. Each slip is double headed and consists of—

- (1) a detachable title separated by perforations from
- (2) the main body of the slip.

The paper used is not less stout than demy H.M., the dimensions being $12\frac{1}{2}'' \times 4\frac{1}{4}''$, while the width of the detachable title (D.T.) is one inch. As soon as a correct catch-title is approved—the head of the branch is expected to supervise the compilation clerk in this respect—it is entered both on the detachable title and on the main slip. The former is torn off at the perforation and handed over to the record-keeper, forming a serially numbered card index slip which he puts away in alphabetical order in a small box of suitable size. If in addition to the chief title, subsidiary titles are considered necessary for purposes of reference, the record-keeper prepares subsidiary cards and puts them in their proper alphabetical order in the same box. A separate box is kept for each compilation, and from time to time, when the number of cards becomes large, the record-keeper sorts out all disposed of cases and types or prints a convenient index. The cards relating to those cases are then put away separately, only undisposed of items being allowed to remain in the box.

As a check against the loss of cases, a periodical census of cards is taken, at least once in three months, so as to make certain that no serial number is missing.

Mr. Anderson's pamphlet does not, however, make clear whether there is any machinery for the purpose of checking the disappearance of papers between the opening of the tappal and the receipt of a docket slip from the record-keeper. In the army offices the general receipt register is supposed to serve this purpose.

14. I return now to the main body of the docket slip. This is retained by the compilation clerk when the detachable title is given to the record-keeper, and accompanies the case from

* Apparently it is retained in the office if the papers in original are sent out.

† Useful abbreviated symbols are employed.

start to finish so long as it remains in the office*. Underneath the title come a succession of entries† indicating very briefly the action taken and the stage of progress reached. It thus furnishes a brief history of the case, including machinery for the checking of delay by the issue of reminders, and advantage of this concise record is taken to destroy routine papers at once. When the stage of final disposal is reached, the head of the branch verifies that the case is correctly classified for permanent or temporary preservation and satisfies himself that nothing remains unsettled, that the title does not need correction (e.g., by reason of some change in character during the evolution of the case), that all the papers are intact except originals due for return to the parties, and that superfluous papers, e.g., reminders and duplicates, are removed. When his initials are affixed in token of this check, the compilation clerk takes the case to the record-keeper and both these officials initial the detachable title (or index card) as evidence that the case has been given and received into the record room.

15. There is much, I think, that is attractive in the Bombay system, and it would seem to repay detailed study, though the cult of abbreviations is perhaps carried too far. I gathered from Mr. Hudson that Mr. Anderson was rather an enthusiast on the subject, which is only natural, seeing that apparently he is himself the creator of the system. But it is now some years since its first introduction in one district (Surat) at least, and enough practical experience should have been gained to show whether the system is as satisfactory as Mr. Anderson claims and whether district offices generally can work it properly.

III

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), Mis. No. 1772, dated 10th October 1916.

The Hon'ble Mr. R. B. CLEGG,
Commissioner of Land Revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. N. S. BRODIE,
Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. LL. E. BUCKLEY,
Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Survey, Land Records and Agriculture.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. E. COUCHMAN,
Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests.

In reply to the Memorandum of Government No. 992-D/16-1, Revenue, dated 23rd May 1916, forwarding to the Board for remarks a copy of paragraphs 93 and 94 of a note on "the indexed slip system of conducting, registering, titling and indexing official correspondence" by Mr. F. G. H. Anderson, M.A., I.C.S., of the Bombay Presidency, the Board begs to submit the following report.

2. The main feature of Mr. Anderson's proposal is that in "internal" correspondence between officers of the same district, the unofficial style should be used, the papers being sent in original. He observes that in these days there is no fear of communications being destroyed or distorted by officers or of their being delayed in transit, and that his docket slip and index system will serve almost all the purposes for which office copies are kept, if the matter is not so old as to be out of memory.

3. None of the nine* Collectors to whom the proposal was referred is in favour of its adoption. They are generally agreed that no hard and fast rules should be laid down, and that it should be left to the discretion of officers to adopt the official or the unofficial form, as they think fit in each case. Some of them

* Ganjam.	Tanjore.
Gōdāvari.	Madura.
Guntūr.	Rāmnād.
Kurnool.	Malabar.
South Arcot.	

point out that in certain circumstances the disposal number system itself admits of papers being sent out in original, and to this extent possesses one of the advantages claimed for Mr. Anderson's proposal. To the general adoption of the Bombay system, however, in substitution for the system in force many objections have been urged, and they may thus be summarized:—

- (1) It would result in an increase of long pending papers.
- (2) There is the risk of files miscarrying or being mislaid.
- (3) Almost every important file would have to be sent by registered post, which would add considerably to postage charges.
- (4) When several officers have to be consulted on a subject, considerable delay and confusion are likely to occur.
- (5) If no office copies of important reports were kept, it would be difficult, especially in view of the constant changes in personnel, to ascertain whether a particular subject had been gone into or how it had been decided.
- (6) There is the risk of important reports evidencing the rights of Government or of private parties being lost sight of, unless a very efficient system of indexing and précis making is enforced; and considerable difficulty will be experienced in conducting civil suits.

(7) The time of officers and clerks would be wasted in deciphering the original drafts and notes of other offices, with all their corrections and deformities; innumerable mistakes would result from bad writing and misunderstood orders.

(8) The maintenance of office copies is indispensable for reference in intermediate stages as, owing to the variety and complicated nature of the subjects that come up for daily disposal, it would be impossible to recall at once all the facts of a case.

(9) The temptation to suppress files in the absence of duplicates would be greater.

(10) There is the possibility that if all expressions of courtesy and politeness are dispensed with in official communications, friction between officers may more easily arise.

Mr. R. B. Wood (Collector of Tanjore), who has had experience of the Bombay system and whose opinion is therefore of great value, condemns it very strongly. A copy of his report is submitted for the perusal of Government.

4. The unofficial system of correspondence was first introduced in this Presidency in 1898 at the instance of the Hon'ble Sir William Meyer. It was adopted by Secretaries to Government in references to Heads of Departments (see G.O. No. 878, Public, dated 9th July 1898), and since then it has gradually come into use in the Board's office. But it does not seem feasible to extend it generally to mufassal offices.

The objections to the adoption of the system in the districts as between officers in different stations are great, and even fatal. Even as between officers in the same station, there are difficulties which do not arise in a Presidency town; most important, perhaps, is the fact that offices and officers are constantly on the move and work cannot proceed in so orderly a fashion as in the Presidency offices. Officers do not know one another's movements exactly; consequently files sent out "U.O." would be delayed, or else sent out into camp, and the conditions of safety which are essential to the system would be lost. The Board considers therefore that, while in the mufassal generally there is but little scope for the employment of the system, it is desirable that Collectors should consult unofficially the officers of other departments stationed at the headquarters, whenever they find it convenient to do so. The Board believes that this is already done to some extent, and would not recommend any extension of the practice.

(True extract)

H. R. PATE,
Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with a copy of letter from the Collector of Tanjore.

ENCLOSURE

Letter—from R. B. Wood, Esq., I.C.S., Collector of Tanjore.
To—the Secretary to the Commissioners of Land Revenue.
Dated—the 22nd July 1916.
No.—D. Dis. 3108/Rev.

With reference to Board's Reference No. 1067-Gt./16-1, dated 2nd June 1916, I have the honour to state that it is not easy to criticise Mr. Anderson's suggestions without knowing his detailed system of dockets and index. He may have worked this out on lines which would make his suggestions under reference feasible; but I venture to doubt very seriously whether he has.

2. Dealing with his suggestions as they stand, I believe that so far as they are workable, they are in common use everywhere. For the most part, however, they are not workable. Petitions, complaints about matters which call for no enquiry, office matters arising between two departments, and similar subjects, are even now being dealt with every day by the method "A.C., Please report on this: please see to this: A.C. for report. D.S.P., do you know what this is about? etc." and the endorsement is copied in the R.C. register or a slip docket kept. Some officers use this method more than others. It is exceedingly useful if employed with discretion, but has to be dropped the moment the subject shows any signs of developing into importance, otherwise the officers are laying up trouble for themselves. Most officers could use this method much more than they do but it is better to err on the safe side, and use it too little, rather than too much.

3. Mr. Anderson apparently has a leaning to the method of "passing the case along in original:—the Universal vernacular style." I had 2½ years' experience of it in the Bombay Presidency and I know of no better method of avoiding the difficulty of coming to a decision. Files of 200 or 300 pages were quite common in these vernacular snowballs. If anyone took the trouble to look through one, the same questions were found being asked time after time, in a sort of cycle. Each answer suggested another question, and in a few months the first questions and answers were forgotten and were started all over again; and finally orders were usually passed with some of the important points out of view. Files which had been running five or six years were quite common, and lost files were perhaps commoner still. I have no words bad enough to express my opinion of the Bombay Vernacular style of business; and the Bombay Collectors I met were in despair about it. It was however nothing else than Mr. Anderson's working-dress method followed, not with care and discretion but as the universal system.

4. Mr. Anderson says that the duplicating system seems to have risen owing to distrust, and the necessity of an office copy to confound all efforts to destroy or distort communications. Again, I entirely disagree. The fair copies are necessary to make legible and clear drafts for the officers receiving the fair copies; and to enable both officers to have a record for rapid reference. Take any subject which is being dealt with by a Collector, his Divisional Officers, and the Divisional Officers' Tahsildars; the Collector cannot send the whole file to all his Divisional Officers in original, and must clearly keep office-copies; similarly the Divisional Officers have to keep office-copies in writing to their Tahsildars. Supposing that the Tahsildars keep no office-copies of their replies to the Divisional Officers, and the Divisional Officers keep no office-copies of their replies but send their whole file to the Collector, then every reference back to the Divisional Officer or to any of his Tahsildars must also include their file of papers: the Collector's file will be constantly broken as papers are taken off it to go to one Divisional Officer or another, and he will be held up time after time because papers which he wants are not in the office. True, he may send and get them in four or five days, but if the Divisional Officer or Tahsildar is in the middle of further enquiries, his work will be badly delayed by this. Office work is a great deal too heavy to waste time sending all over the district for files which are often being worked on by the officers who have them.

5. Again in any papers which are being dealt with by, e.g., the Collector, the Executive Engineer and the Divisional Officer, the difficulties arising from only one officer having the file will be endless; and when the case is finished, further difficulties may be expected owing to only one out of the three or four officers knowing when the papers have been finally recorded. In Bombay, the disputes as to where files had finally come to rest were endless.

6. We could indeed avoid the expense of one or two copying and typing clerks in most offices by refusing to make fair copies and sending all papers out in original. The results would be—

- (1) Innumerable mistakes owing to bad writing and misunderstood orders.
- (2) A great increase in long pending papers.
- (3) Constant loss of files.
- (4) A greatly increased bill for postage stamps.
- (5) Extraordinary difficulties in civil suits. This point I would specially emphasize.

The muddles in Collector's offices in Bombay and Bengal, as revealed from time to time in the Indian Law Reports series, are largely due to the original endorsement method of doing business.

Order—No. 2964, Revenue, dated 20th September 1917.

In the foregoing papers the question is discussed whether the "unofficial"

Miscellaneous

system of correspondence which is already in force in the Government and Board's offices could with advantage be prescribed for general adoption in mufassal offices. The system consists in passing on files in original and without any formal covering letter from one officer or department to another with a note or an informal endorsement asking for or furnishing information. In its Proceedings No. 1772, dated 10th October 1916, the Board has pointed out certain objections to the adoption of the system in the districts. While agreeing with the Board of Revenue that it is not feasible to extend this system generally to mufassal offices, the Government desire that, as suggested by the Board, Collectors and other officers should not hesitate to employ this method of correspondence whenever they find it convenient to do so.

2. There are other directions in which it may be possible to introduce greater elasticity into official correspondence. In mufassal offices correspondence between officers is ordinarily carried on in the regular letter form, the endorsement form, which frequently affords a convenient and economical substitute, being but rarely employed. It seems likely that freer resort to the endorsement form is to some extent obstructed by the idea that an endorsement is a less polite form of address than a letter and this notion has possibly been to some extent encouraged by the orders passed from time to time prescribing the form of communication between officers of different departments. Several of these will be found in clauses (iii), (v), (vi), (vii), (ix) and (x) of paragraph 12 of B.S.O. No. 163, where certain classes of officers are directed to adopt the ordinary letter form of correspondence when addressing certain other classes of officials. The principle underlying these various orders was not, however, that the letter form is in itself any more courteous than an endorsement or a communication in the third person such as is sometimes employed: the intention was merely to make it clear that in the case of the officers referred to, proceedings or similar mandatory forms implying subordination, should not be used, but the form of communication should be that usually resorted to between officers of equal status.

3. In order to prevent any erroneous impression to which the orders in question may give rise, the Government consider that they should now be modified so as to make their meaning clear as set out above, and the opportunity will be taken to direct that the endorsement form should be used, in preference to the letter form, between officers of whatever status whenever that can conveniently be done. The Board of Revenue is requested to submit, for the approval of Government, consequential amendments to its Standing Orders and other departmental codes issued under its authority. Orders amending other departmental rules will issue in the respective departments.

(True extract)

A. R. KNAPP,
Acting Secretary to Government.

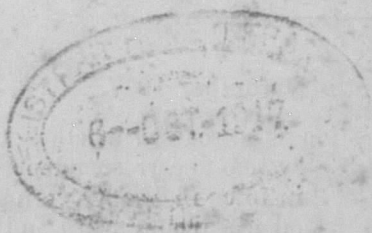
To the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue).
,, Departments of the Secretariat.

Forwarded to the

(By order)

Home (Educational) Dept.

Registrar.



End

Communicated to the Heads of
Depts under the Home (Educational)
Dept. for necessary action

23.10.17

(Index)

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. No. 2964, REVENUE, DATED 20TH SEPTEMBER 1917

[SUBJECT.—System of unofficial references and correspondence by endorsement.]

Previous papers:

G.O. 291, Judicial,	27th May 1868	Memo. 6257-C., P.W.D.,	20th Oct. 1911
B.P. 1416	29th Sep. 1880	G.O. 3073, Revenue,	22nd „ 1913
G.O. 283, Educational,	20th May 1889	B.P. 158, L.R.,	2nd June 1915
„ 555, Public,	2nd Aug. 1890	G.O. 1643 L.,	4th Nov. „
„ 878 „	9th July 1898	B.P. 3, L.R.,	3rd Jan. 1916

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Extract of the Honourable Member's note on the file about mechanical filing system,
dated the 28th April 1916.

2. I gather that the Bombay Presidency has (until lately) been a good deal behind in many points connected with correspondence, but there are useful hints in "Mr. Anderson's Labour Saving Suggestions", pages 24—32. I don't approve of his love of abbreviations, e.g. "S.P. Cow Bamanhalli" for "Surplus sale-proceeds of a cow impounded at Bamanhalli" (1), but might not something be made of his idea of doing away with office copies in correspondence between officers in the same district (paragraph 94)? The Military Department always send papers round in original, and though it would not suit the Secretariat, I fancy there is a large field for the extension of this method. I would send a copy of paragraphs 93 and 94 to the Board for remarks.

A. G. C[ARDEW]—28-4-16.

Please see the Honourable Member's (Public) note dated 28th April 1916. With reference to paragraph 2 of those notes, it is submitted that an extract of those notes together with a copy of paragraphs 93—94 of "The indexed slip system of conducting, registering, titling and indexing official correspondence" by Mr. F. G. H. Anderson, M.A., I.C.S., may be sent to Revenue Department with the request that the Board may be consulted as directed by the Honourable Member.

T.A.S.—11-5-16.

Yes.

L. E. KERSHAW—11-5-16.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

A draft official memorandum to the Board of Revenue (Full Board) is submitted for approval.

S.J.A.—17-5-16.

V.P.—20-5-16.

A. H. A. TODD—22-5-16.

[Official Memorandum No. 992-D/16-1, dated 23rd May 1916.]

Telephonic message—from the Assistant Secretary to the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue).

To—the Superintendent, Revenue Department.

Dated—Madras, the 9th June 1916.

Please see paragraph 94 of Mr. Anderson's note referred to the Board of Revenue for remarks with Memorandum No. 992-D/16-1, dated 23rd May 1916.

Will you please send specimens of "docket slip" and "index system" referred to in that paragraph.

For a correct understanding of the docket slip and index system in question a perusal of the greater portion of the first 88 paragraphs of Mr. Anderson's book seems necessary. A specimen index slip is printed as Appendix II at page 36 of the book (vide paragraph 39 at page 11 *ibid*). It is, therefore, submitted that at least one copy of the publication should be forwarded to the Board for reference. But it is understood from the Financial Department that only one copy is available and that this was obtained by the Chief Secretary from the author direct. (The book has been printed at the Mission Press, Surat, and does not appear to be a Government publication; but the Bombay Government may perhaps be able to supply copies). For present purposes the only available copy may, with Chief Secretary's permission, be sent to the Board for reference and return.

S.J.A.—15-6-16.

V.P.—15-6-16.

This would seem most convenient. May this copy be sent to the Board for use and return?

A. H. A. TODD—15-6-16.

CHIEF SECRETARIAT.

For orders.

L. E. KERSHAW—16-6-16.

The one copy I procured may be wanted here—I expect I shall need it very soon—and it is certainly not necessary to send it to the Board for the purposes referred to by the Honourable Member. A brief account of the docket slip and index system is given in my note on the subject when I was at Delhi and may be extracted. That should supply the Board's reasonable requirements.

Put up please.

L.D.—17-6-16.

L. DAVIDSON—17-6-16.

A typed copy of the extract from the Chief Secretary's note in the main file is submitted. The case may be returned to Revenue, who may be informed that Financial has no objection to their sending to the Board a typed copy of Appendix II of Mr. Anderson's pamphlet also, if they consider it necessary, and they may be requested to return the pamphlet to Financial at a very early date.

T.R.N.N.—19-6-16.

A.S.—19-6-16.

L.E.K.—20-6-16.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

It is submitted that a copy of paragraphs 13-15 of the Chief Secretary's note may be communicated to the Board of Revenue. It does not seem necessary to send a specimen copy of the docket slip (pages 36-37 of the pamphlet) as it is fully explained in the Chief Secretary's note. Besides, the docket slip will not be intelligible unless the large number of abbreviations which are used therein are explained.

A draft official memorandum is submitted for approval. The pamphlet will be returned to Financial after approval of the official memorandum.

S.J.A.—23-6-16.

V.P.—28-6-16.

A. H. A. TODD—28-6-16.

Issue.

J. P. BEDFORD—29-6-16.

[Official Memorandum No. 992/D-16-2, dated 30th June 1916.]

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue), Mis. No. 1772, dated 10th October 1916.

In Official Memorandum No. 992-D/16-1, dated 23rd May 1916, the Board of Revenue (Full Board) was requested to offer remarks on the suggestion of Mr. Anderson, I.C.S., of the Bombay Presidency that in internal correspondence between officers of the district and department the un-official style should be used and the papers sent out in original.

2. The objections to a general adoption of the un-official style of correspondence in district offices are stated in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Board's Proceedings and in Mr. Wood's letter with special reference to the Bombay system. Of the ten objections to the system summarised in paragraph 3 of the Board's Proceedings only two (objections 7 and 10) * may be regarded as not of much weight; but the other objections are more or less serious. The Board's conclusion is that the objections to the adoption of the system in the districts as between officers in different stations are great and even fatal and that even as between officers in the same station there are difficulties which do not arise in a presidency town. It considers, therefore, that while in the mufassal generally there is but little scope for the employment of the system, it is desirable that Collectors should consult unofficially the officers of other departments stationed at the headquarters, whenever they find it convenient to do so. The Board believes that this is already done to some extent, but would not recommend any extension of the practice.

* As to 10, I heard recently of a case of trouble where a junior divisional officer resented "returned" as an endorsement by an Assistant Superintendent of Police!

A.H.A.T.—14-12-16

3. It seems that the un-official system of reference is not quite workable in districts in the case of files which are either important or require several officers to be consulted but may, with safety and advantage, be adopted in routine and unimportant matters. How far this system is in vogue in the districts is not known. The Board believes that this is already done to some extent and would not recommend extension of the practice. Mr. Wood states that so far as Mr. Anderson's suggestions are workable they are in common use everywhere though some officers use this method more than others and that it is exceedingly useful if employed with discretion, but should be dropped the moment the subject shows any signs of developing into importance. It is for orders whether the Board may be asked to bring to the notice of Collectors the advantage of using the unofficial system of reference more widely in unimportant and routine subjects not requiring simultaneous consultation with several officers.

4. Submitted that the file may be returned, with the remarks of this department, to the Financial Department, who asked (at page 1 *supra*) that the Board of Revenue might be consulted.

S.J.A.—1-11-16.

V.P.—7-11-16

There seems little to add to the objections raised by the Board.

Mr. Anderson's docket slip does not give more than the very briefest information about the file, and cannot take the place of the office copy, even were the objection to sending out papers in original less serious than it is.

A.H.A.T.—14-12-16.

I agree with the Board of Revenue. I may add that I do not agree with this office in regarding either the second or the last of the Board's ten objections as comparatively trifling. I always found that the wording of endorsements to independent or quasi-independent officers of one's own district required especial care, so as to avoid giving offence. Again, the risk of loss in transmission is a most serious matter, when the file includes a lot of opinions by a variety of officers, none of whom have kept a record of what they have written. The registering of all communications would prevent this, but this is hardly practical politics and would, I imagine, mean mutiny in the Postal Department.

Mr. Wood is, I think, correct in his general line of argument, namely, that, so far as the principles and practice of unofficial correspondence is concerned, Bombay has nothing to teach us. I myself stretched it as far as it would bear in Salem and Tanjore. Magisterial Calendar forms and Arms Act license applications are examples. I dealt with these by endorsements in my own hand, mostly to the subordinates submitting them, but when necessary to officers of other departments. Half a dozen stray papers in the week (apart from those mentioned above) can be dealt with similarly, but, the instant two or three officers are dragged in or complications arise, the endorsement form is instinctively dropped like a red-hot poker by every officer of sense and experience.

Of course diaries and other confidential communications can be dealt with (and are dealt with) by endorsement, being intended to be of an intimate and more or less unconventional character. Even here there are serious dangers. They led me into two serious quarrels, one with an excellent Police officer, the other with an equally excellent Forest officer. In fact, I have been led to doubt whether this "diary" form of communication, except between undoubted superiors and subordinates, does not do as much harm as good.

Some years back (I think in General Sinclair or General Sibthorpe's time), I used to get these snow-ball accretions in the Medical department. Twenty pages of correspondence on the conduct of some local medical subordinate was pitched at my head: I added my quota to the file and sent it on to somebody else, after which I never saw or heard of it again, though the matter was one which concerned me, as the head of the district, as much as or more than anybody else. Doubtless I could have made my office take copies of everything on the record up to the point at which I saw it and could then have pegged away at the Surgeon-General on my own account until I found out what was done. In other words, by about five times the amount of worry and trouble, I could under this "unofficial" system have attained something approaching the result which is obtained naturally and without effort under the Madras system.

I speak with due hesitancy, but my information is that Bombay is better at devising paper systems than at embodying them in practice. This has, I believe, been the general experience in the departments of Survey, Maintenance and Record of Rights: so the Survey Committee found. Survey manuals everywhere, giving quite a contoured effect to the country: but, when they wanted to find a point on a ryot's field, they told the ryot to go and show it to them! I doubt whether it is safe to take Bombay administration at its book value.

J. P. BEDFORD—15-12-16.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Submitted. The Board's report in the current file has been called for with reference to the Honourable Member's note in the mechanical filing system (vide linked file), an extract of which is on page 1 ante.

V.S.—21-12-16.

T.H.R.—12-12-16.

Financial is no longer concerned with this case. Revenue may be asked kindly to submit it to the Honourable Member.

L. E. KERSHAW—22-12-16.

Yes: the further disposal of the case is, I think, primarily for Revenue, if, as I presume, the Honourable Member had revenue offices in view. Mr. Bedford mentioned the file to me personally before marking it for Financial however, and I may have given him the impression that it might be regarded as a Financial case. It would, however, be impossible without an officer on special duty to examine and discuss the applicability of the system to all departments, and the most convenient plan would no doubt be to scrutinize the case of revenue offices first.

On the general issue I admit the force of the Board's criticisms and what Mr. Wood and Mr. Bedford have written, but I still think that the method of unofficial reference admits of some extension in mufassal offices and that formal letters "having the honour to enquire," etc., might with advantage be more freely replaced by dockets or simple endorsements. If these simpler forms of communication were officially recognized and commended, there would be no scope for objection from the hypersensitive. It would be a hopeless task from the Secretariat desk to attempt to frame specific rules, and I do not contemplate anything more than a general instruction.

When the war is over and it is possible to place a competent officer on special duty thoroughly to examine the applicability of the Bombay system with sufficient leisure to make a good job of the matter, we may conceivably derive benefit from further study of Mr. Anderson's methods. There is this advantage in the delay, that further trial will have exposed weaknesses.

L. DAVIDSON—1-1-17.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Submitted.

S.J.A.—5-1-17.

V.P.—5-1-17.

A. H. A. TODD—6-1-17.

On one point, I may have unintentionally misled the Chief Secretary. When I spoke of the restriction of a particular form of correspondence to license applications, calendars and so forth, the form of correspondence which I had in mind was what I may call for shortness the "snowball" form. The simple endorsement by B on a communication passing from A (through B) to C might almost be called the rule as regards communications from Tahsildars to Collectors, in cases in which the Divisional officer has little or nothing to add. I think that the practice is that the Tahsildar's report is addressed to the Divisional officer (so that it is not a question of the flying seal), but the Divisional officer merely endorses "forwarded" or "submitted" with whatever he may wish to add. Again, when a Collector makes a reference to the local head of another department (e.g., the Executive Engineer or Superintendent of Police), it is not unusual for him to get a reply in the form of a report from a subordinate of the officer addressed and an endorsement forwarding it "with reference to his letter."

Here again I submit that hard and fast rules are undesirable. There are cases in which a Divisional officer should not deal with communications in this way or at any rate should not be authorized or encouraged to do so. I have known districts where remonstrances against punishment or censure or appeals for promotion were endorsed by Divisional officers as a mere matter of routine. In these and other cases, if a Divisional officer considers a protest or reminder to his superior officer fitting and appropriate, it is but seemly for him to make it his own. Similarly, in dealing with really important subjects. The line is a subtle one and depends on the personal equation, and rules seem out of place.

Again, I have known cases in which the mere forwarding by a head of a department of a report from his subordinate was most awkward, especially if the matter dealt with was one in which there was friction between the two departments. A temperate remonstrance from (say) an Executive Engineer might appease a quarrel, when the forwarding of an intemperate report from his subordinate would aggravate it.

I hope the Honourable Member will not be led to think that my up-country life has been a series of quarrels. I have had a few of course: I hope I have been of

use in staving off others. But, one way or the other, I have found that methods of correspondence are fruitful causes of misunderstanding.

J. P. BEDFORD—6-1-17.

The reasons adduced by the Board against the Bombay method, or that advocated by Mr. Anderson, are of weight and I agree that no general introduction of the system is to be thought of. I concur also with the Chief Secretary's remark that the system of unofficial reference might be extended in the mufassal. I can't trace in the Board's Standing Order No. 163 the references bearing on the question of reference by endorsement or other informal or unofficial form. Please examine the existing rules, and note whether some general remarks on the advantages of this method in suitable cases may be inserted in the Board's Standing Order.

A. G. C[ARDEW]—7-1-17.

Note and print up.

J. P. BEDFORD—8-1-17.

The un-official system of correspondence not having been so far prescribed for adoption in district offices, there is no reference to it in the Board's Standing Orders. Board's Standing Order No. 163 (12) deals with the styles of address to be adopted by revenue officers in the district. Sub-paragraph (ii) of the Board's Standing Order permits the form of endorsements being used in trifling cases of correspondence with the Board of Revenue or the Government. Collectors avail themselves of this provision to a considerable extent and deal with routine cases such as petitions, applications for leave from deputy collectors, etc., by simple endorsements in original. Section 223 of the Forest Code [which is referred to in paragraph (iv) of Board's Standing Order No. 163 (12)] lays down as follows:—

"The District Forest Officer shall communicate freely with the Collector and with the Conservator by office-note and shall not adopt the letter form except in matters which are likely to go beyond the Collector and the Conservator."

2. Having regard to the objections to the adoption of the system in respect of correspondence between officers stationed at different places, the system may perhaps be commended for adoption for the present between Collectors and officers whether of the Revenue or of other departments stationed at the head-quarters of the district subject to necessary limitations; but discretion may also be allowed to Collectors to employ this method of communication with subordinate Revenue officers not stationed at headquarters. The following may perhaps be inserted as the opening sub-paragraph in paragraph 12 of Board's Standing Order No. 163:—

"The ordinary mode of carrying on correspondence is by means of formal communications, copies of which are invariably kept for purposes of reference by the officer issuing them. An alternative system consists in passing files unofficially in original with a note or a simple endorsement informally asking for or furnishing information or remarks and will be found to possess several advantages if used with care and discretion. This system may be adopted by Collectors in routine and unimportant matters when officers of the Revenue and other departments stationed at head-quarters have to be consulted but should not be employed when several officers have to be referred to on the same file or when the subject is of a complicated nature. Collectors may at their discretion employ this method of communication also in dealing with officers of the Revenue Department not stationed at the head-quarters of the district."

The following may also be added to Board's Standing Order No. 163 (16) (ii):—

"The unofficial mode of consultation as explained in paragraph 16 (12) of Standing Order No. 163 may be resorted to when convenient."

V.P.—5-2-17.

If confined to Collectors, the system should not get out of hand.

A. H. A. TODD—8-2-17.

I do not think the amendment to Board's Standing Order proposed by the office is quite satisfactory. It confines the system to Collectors' offices. As a matter of fact, Divisional officers do send out unofficial references in simple cases. In my opinion all that is required is a recommendation from Government that these references should be encouraged. That would prevent any sensitive officer from objecting.

D. N. STRATHIE—8-3-17.

My comment on the draft amendment of Board's Standing Order No. 163 put up in the office note is that it is superfluous. It proposes to confine to Collectors the alternative system which it commends to notice. Even as the rules stand no Collector, I think, would hesitate to send a file to an officer of his own or another department for his opinion if that course is likely to serve a useful purpose. Unless we can do more than this in disposing of the present subject, it seems hardly necessary to do anything at all.

2. But it would, I submit, be a pity to allow the idea of simplifying correspondence in mufassal offices to end in smoke. The Honourable Member in his note of the 7th January 1917 rightly pointed out that Board's Standing Order No. 163 contained no allusion not only to the unofficial reference as established in the Secretariat but also to the use of endorsements. Such endorsements are of course frequently resorted to, at any rate as between a Collector and his subordinates, as also sometimes in correspondence with such officers as the District Superintendent of Police and the District Medical and Sanitary Officer. But they are in my opinion not used nearly as freely as they might be. The first step, therefore, in my opinion is to insert a paragraph in Board's Standing Order No. 163 enjoining the use of this system of correspondence *in preference* to the ordinary letter whenever it can be conveniently employed. An obstacle to the free use of this system, however, exists in the idea which so commonly prevails particularly among Indian officials that an endorsement is a less polite form of address than a letter. This notion has, I believe, been engendered by the various orders passed from time to time prescribing the mode of communication between officers of various departments. Several of these will be found in Board's Standing Order No. 163. Under paragraph 12, clause (v), of that Board's Standing Order Collectors are directed to address Presidents of Local Boards and Chairmen of municipal councils and union panchayats invariably by letter. Under clause (iii) Taluk officers addressing officers of other departments in English are to adopt the ordinary official *letter* form and to be similarly addressed by *letter* by upper subordinates of the Public Works Department. Under clause (vii) assistant inspectors of schools should address Collectors and Presidents of District Boards by *letter* and under clause (ix) Assistant Surgeons in writing to Presidents of Local Boards should adopt a similar form. Under clause (x) Revenue divisional officers of all grades should correspond by letter in the ordinary form.

3. The earliest of these orders is that last referred to which dates back to 1868. As will be seen from the original of G.O. No. 865, Judicial, dated 27th May 1868, the question then at issue was whether the letter or the 'mandatory form', viz., Proceedings or memoranda, should be used. The letter implied, roughly, equality of rank; the other forms subordination. The same principle has, I think, been observed in the later orders in which correspondence by letter has been prescribed. The

point I wish to make is that the rule that two officers should correspond by letter should not be implied as meaning that there is anything discourteous or improper in their corresponding by endorsement; that the very common misunderstanding on this point should be set right, and that in all cases where correspondence by letter is now provided the endorsement form as an alternative should be specifically made permissible. The endorsement is the form which in the mufassal would naturally represent the 'unofficial reference' system of the Secretariat.

A Once remove the bugbear of possible objections to the use of an endorsement on the ground of discourtesy, and the principal obstacles to the extension of what is undoubtedly a convenient and economical system of correspondence will largely disappear. While I would certainly not interfere with the 'full dress' system of correspondence on occasions when 'full dress' is appropriate we want, I think, in correspondence between mufassal offices generally a simplified and more economical form of working dress.

4 The action now proposed will only amount to an amendment of the Board's Standing Order. But as it will affect officers other than those in the Revenue Department, this note is sent to other departments likely to be concerned for favour of their remarks.

A. R. KNAPP—20-3-17.

HOME (JUDICIAL) DEPARTMENT.

It is submitted that this department may agree with the view expressed at A in paragraph 3 of the Revenue Department note ante and the case may be passed on to Local and Municipal.

T.S.N.—27-3-17.

M.V.V.—27-3-17.

N.K.—29-3-17.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—31-3-17.

I believe the 'u.o.' method is much used in the Police. While quite agreeing with the Revenue Secretary in his view on endorsements, I am not sure of his statement: "The endorsement is the form which in the mufassal would naturally represent the 'u.o. reference' system of the Secretariat." Both methods might be used in suitable circumstances alongside of each other.

E. A. HARVEY—2-4-17.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

Submitted that the suggestion of the Revenue Secretary at A ante may be accepted in this department.

K.V.V.—12-4-17.

V.S.—12-4-17.

N. CHENGAL RAO—12-4-17.

V. T. KRISHNAMA ACHARIYAR—13-4-17.

I can see no harm in the substitution of an endorsement for a formal letter in a case in which original papers are to be sent from one office to another. I do not see how it could be used in any other case.

R. A. GRAHAM—18-4-17.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

K The present proposal relates to the use of the 'endorsement' form in communications between presumably officers of similar status of two different departments in the mufassal, in cases where correspondence by letter is now prescribed as the proper method of communication. If the presumption at K is correct, there would be no objection to the suggestion of the Revenue Secretary, but the endorsement form can be used only in certain cases as pointed out by the Local and Municipal Secretary.

2. Attention is invited to Circular Memorandum No. 6257 C., dated 20th October 1911, in which certain instructions have been issued to Public Works Department officers as to the form of address which should be adopted by them in corresponding with officers of other departments. These instructions will have to be revised, if the proposal above is approved.

The file may be returned to Revenue with these remarks.

K.G.—10-5-17.

G. D. PLUMMER—11-5-17.

W. G. MOLESWORTH—12-5-17.

S. B. MURRAY—14-5-17.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

With reference to the Public Works Department note above, it does not appear from the Secretary's note at A on page 8 that he intended to confine the endorsement form of correspondence to officers of similar status in different departments. The Public Works Department agree to the adoption of the "endorsement" form of correspondence on the understanding that it should be restricted to officers of the same status, and remark with Local and Municipal Department, that such correspondence could be used only in a case in which original papers are to be sent from one office to another. (otherwise, all the departments of the Secretariat referred to, seem to be generally in agreement with the proposal of the Secretary.

P.C.—18-5-17.

I don't think there is any need at all to confine the endorsement form to officers of similar status. The only restriction needed is that it should be confined to officers intelligent enough to use it on the proper occasions, and that would include almost everybody. Once it is understood that no discourtesy is intended and that it is an alternative to a letter form, and its use may be made almost universal. But, I think the Secretary would go further. The endorsement forms can only be used in certain cases. It cannot be used for originating a correspondence, and is unsuitable where it is desirable to keep an office copy in cases where the original paper is to come to rest in some other office.

In such cases the memorandum form, to which Tahsildar Abboyi Nayudu objects in the linked file* might be used. The form of memorandum there used (page 15

of linked file) could well be made universal. It would not supersede entirely the full dress form. The mere fact that it runs in the third person makes it rather unsuitable for long and complicated drafts. But for expressing brief requests it is quite good.

If it is used, sensitive people will still worry about the actual wording "so and so has the honour to request," could correspond to the official full dress "I have the honour," but I don't know that the actual form need be laid down.

The only thing, I see against it, is that when all is said or done it doesn't really economise much in paper and time over the old letter form to anything like the extent that the endorsement form does in cases to which it is suited.

Ruffled feelings might be smoothed by inserting the words "with compliments," as I believe they do in Bombay.

A. H. A. TODD—19-5-17.

I submit the file now with reference to the Honourable Member's note, dated 7th January 1917, at page 6 supra. I have little to add to my note, dated 20th March 1917. If we can lay down that the endorsement form should be used whenever possible, between officers of whatever status, and if we make it clear that this form is or can be just as courteous as the more formal letter, I am sure that the result will be a great saving of time and paper in many mufassal offices.

2. It is true that the opportunities for the use of the endorsement form are limited. It is of no use for initiating a correspondence, but that is no reason for refusing the advantages which even its limited use will afford.

3. I do not think that much purpose would be served at present by attempting to substitute the memorandum form for the letter in cases where the endorsement cannot be used. The saving in writing would be small and the use of the third person has pitfalls which would often be embarrassing to the mufassal clerk.

4. I may add that the u.o. form proper is chiefly of use where there are notes to be sent for perusal. This will seldom be the case in the mufassal; hence my suggestion that the endorsement form will practically take its place.

5. If the Honourable Member approves generally of the views now suggested, a draft on the whole subject will be prepared.

A. R. KNAPP—29-5-17.

I agree with Mr. Knapp. The amendments should be so drafted as to dispose finally of the idea that the endorsement is to be regarded as an offensive method of communication.

A. G. C[ARDEW]—1-6-17.

Draft please.

A.R.K.—1-6-17.

A draft order is submitted for approval. It may be sent to Public Works Department with reference to their note at pages 8-9 supra.

U.K.—4-6-17.

V.P.—13-6-17.

No reference is made to the u.o. system, as it is not proposed to take any action with regard to the extension of its use.

A. H. A. TODD—14-6-17.

The draft as now revised may go to other departments for acceptance.

A.R.K.—19-7-17.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

The draft order may, it is submitted, be accepted, and the file passed on to the Financial Department. So far as this department is concerned, there are no departmental rules requiring amendments with reference to the Revenue draft. Submitted that this remark is applicable to Public (war) section also.

T.S.—25-7-17.

A.H.—26-7-17.

C.P.K.—27-7-17.

R. H. COURTENAY—30-7-17.

FINANCIAL DEPARTMENT.

Submitted that the draft order may be accepted.

T.H.R.—2-8-17.

Chief Secretary will like to see.

L. E. KERSHAW—4-8-17.

An excellent reform.

L. DAVIDSON—6-8-17.

LOCAL AND MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT.

We may accept the draft.

V. T. KRISHNAMA ACHARI—7-8-17.

Yes. I would remark, however, that one obstacle to the forwarding of original correspondence, by endorsement or otherwise, is the possibility that it may never come back and the record may be lost.

R. A. GRAHAM—8-8-17.

HOME (JUDICIAL) DEPARTMENT.

Please see this department's note on page 8 ante. The draft order put up by Revenue may be accepted in this department and the case passed on to the Public Works Department.

S.N.P.—9-8-17.

M.V.V.—9-8-17.

C.V.—9-8-17.

C.R.—10-8-17.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARI—12-8-17.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—13-8-17.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Please see this department's note on pages 8 and 9 ante and the further notes in the Revenue Department from pages 9 et seq. The draft order may be accepted and the file returned to the Revenue Department.

A.M.—20-8-17.

A.S.N.R.—20-8-17.

G. D. PLUMMER—22-8-17.

W. G. MOLESWORTH—23-8-17.

S. B. MURRAY—24-8-17.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Submitted.

2. The draft order has been accepted by all the departments of the Secretariat. For orders whether it may now issue.

V.S.M.—28-8-17.

V.P.—30-8-17.

D. N. STRATHIE—31-8-17.

As the proposed order affects all departments and is of general importance, it should be circulated for approval before issue.

A. R. KNAPP—1-9-17.

A. G. C[ARDEW]—3-9-17.

P. R[AJAGOPALA ACHARIYAR]—4-9-17.

H. F. W. G[ILLMAN]—4-9-17.

P[ENTLAND]—5-9-17.

[G.O. No. 2964, Revenue, dated 20th September 1917.]

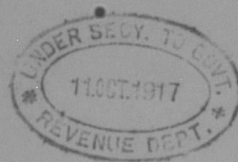
NOTES.

Home (Edn) Dept.

Page

CN^o 3048 From the Revenue Deptt. G.O. No. 2964, dated the 20th Sep. 1917.

Subject - Directing the use of the endorsement form of correspondence in mutual affairs wherever possible.



For the Registrar

Submitted that the Revenue Deptt may be requested u.o. to put up a notes copy of the order.

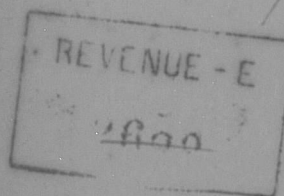
Revenue No 3048A-1
10/10/17

recd
8-10-17
11/10/17

CA
10-10-17

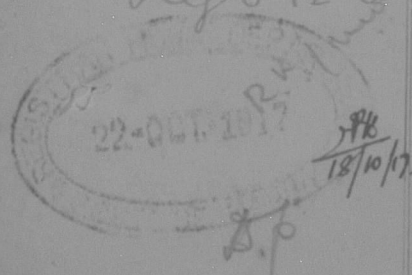
Rev. No

Rev. Deptt



1511

Regd 12-10-17



To Registrar

A Copy of Notes to G.O. 2964 Rev of 20th Sep 1917 is furnished. The file may be returned to Home (Edn) Deptt. 21/10/17

Home (Education) Deptt.

The ~~mode~~ form of correspondence between educational officers is laid down in ~~rule~~ 59 of the Madras Inspection Code. The amendments to the rules in this code are issued by the D.I. himself. It appears therefore sufficient to ~~only~~ communicate the Revenue order to the D.I. as well as to other heads

of departments for information and guidance and to ask the Director to issue the necessary amendments to the Inspect Code.

2. Draft order is submitted for approval.

Se
29.10.17
[Signature]

At
30.10.17

Lu
31.10.17
[Signature]

Home (Edw) DEPARTMENT.

Correspondence

Correspondence
Communicating to Heads of Dpts for information & guidance
for no 2464 Rev. & 20.9.17 describing the use of the endorsement form
of — in municipal offices whenever possible.

READ ALSO:—

READ ALSO:-
C. No. 3048 A, From the Rev. Dept. for, No. 2964, dated 20-9-1917

ORDER.

Misc.

No. 1362, dated 31. 10. 1917

Communicated to the Heads
of Depts under the Home (Edu)
Dept for information and
guidance

2. The D.P.I. is requested to issue the necessary amendments to para. 59 of the ~~the~~ Madras Inspection Code.

29.10.1

Я
3000

317

To The Heads of Depts }
under the Home (Edg) Dept.
(L & C)

When given for copying
When copied
When examined
When signed

191

READ AGAIN G.O. No.
191

DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURE TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DISPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied.
P = Copy abstract only.
Q = Copy heading only.