

(1) Number of pages 8(2) Date of receipt 29.8.41(3) Initials of the Referencer [Signature]

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Financial [Signature]
DEPARTMENT.Spare copy

G.O. No. 1274

Press
Min

Dated 31.7.

1874

5/6

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Read the following papers:—

No. 283.

To

HIS EXCELLENCY VERE HENRY LORD HOBART,
Governor of Madras.

The humble Memorial of the Boatmen
and Fishermen residing at Royapooram
within the local limits of Madras.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH,—

That your memorialists' ancestors, ever since the advent of the British Government in India, have ever evinced the most loyal feelings towards the Government, and, when occasions required it of them, spared neither trouble nor money to forward such business of Government as was demanded of them. What the nature of their services were need not be entered into in detail here, your memorialists content themselves by enclosing a petition presented to Government containing a brief narrative bearing on the subject; but your memorialists cannot refrain bringing one circumstance to notice, which will prove the loyalty of your memorialists' class of men: when the Madras Presidency was taken from the French, your memorialists' forefathers at the time were offered by the French Government all the inducements possible to retain their services, but your memorialists' ancestors having cast their lot with the British Government were willing to abide the result with them, "come weal come woe:" hence, to hold their allegiance to the British Government inviolate, they preferred abandoning their homes and property, their boats, their all, and cling to the British Government, and proceeded to Fort St. David at Cuddalore, where they established themselves. The Government was not unmindful of their loyalty, but in return evinced a paternal solicitude towards memorialists, as will appear by the invariable kindness that characterized the several measures of Government which affected the memorialists.

2. That, on the return of the British Government to Madras, your memorialists located themselves as formerly, some at Chepauk, and others on the spot now occupied by the rice godowns and Lord Clive's Battery.

3. That, owing to the frequent periodical riots between memorialists' class and the Mussulmen of Triplicane, the Government, at the instance of the then Nāwab of the Carnatic, endeavored to remove the boatmen and fishermen resident at Chepauk from that locality.

4. That, though compensation was also offered them then on three several occasions, a removal could not be effected till a free site was granted them, and a site also for their Church. The Government allotted for this purpose their present site at Royapooram.

5. That those located north of Black Town (now the rice godowns and Lord Clive's Battery) were removed to Royapooram, and Government disposed of the grounds vacated very advantageously to private merchants.

6. That Government having given them their present site in lieu of those occupied by them at Chepauk and at Lord Clive's Battery, and your memorialists having been in peaceable occupation of their present site for upwards of seventy-

three years, your memorialists would respectfully submit that their proprietary right is inalienable.

7. That your memorialists have learnt with unfeigned regret that your Lordship's Government have passed an order for the removal of their houses situated in the North Beach at Royapooram, and contiguous to the house lately built by Mr. J. G. Coleman, an influential member of the Municipality, on the ground of sanitation.

8. Your memorialists beg respectfully to submit that the report which was sent into Government by the Municipality for the removal of your memorialists' houses, and upon which report your Lordship's Government have passed the said order, now appealed against, is far from being the truth, inasmuch that your memorialists' houses are not situated near the officers' quarters, nor do they lie near or about any respectable European habitation in Royapooram.

9. Your memorialists further beg to submit that the report of the Municipal Board, recommending the removal of their houses, has emanated from an influential and wealthy member of that august body, Mr. J. G. Coleman, as in the 12th paragraph more particularly mentioned.

10. Your memorialists further beg to submit that, if the Municipality, in making the said report to your Lordship's Government, based their motives upon public grounds and for the public good, two other parcherries, the one situated just in the heart of Royapooram, where the European and East Indian communities reside, and the other located near or next to the officers' quarters, should have been the first to have been so recommended for removal, as the houses in those parcherries are, for the most part, built irregularly, with inflammable materials and closely huddled together without either ventilation or any means of conservancy whatever, and not your memorialists' houses which lie next and beyond the parcherry situated near the officers' quarters, with the necessary divisions and sub-divisions, for the most part contain houses built with brick-in-chunam and with tiled roofings, without any open privies or any filth or rubbish near or about your memorialists' houses, as the conservancy cart passes regularly through our streets and sweeps the night-soil away.

11. Your memorialists regret that they are forced to bring to your Lordship's notice a small piece of jobbery of the Municipality. They would fain like to pass it over in silence, but such a step would not allow them to represent their case in the manner it ought to be represented, nor will it be right on the part of your memorialists to suppress the main facts of their case on account of the character of feelings of any one individual man and allow a number of souls, though poor they be, to suffer thereby.

12. Your memorialists beg to bring to your Lordship's notice, that Mr. J. G. Coleman, an influential and wealthy member of the Municipal corporation, lately built a large house near and contiguous to your memorialists' houses: subsequently, the said Mr. J. G. Coleman requested some of the landlords, who are on the west side of his house, to sell him some of their houses in order to improve and extend his own premises, and which request those people were either unwilling or unable conveniently to comply with: thus thwarted in his endeavor, and piqued at the refusal to sell him any house, or land whatever, the

said Mr. J. G. Coleman was determined to use his official influence and capacity against your memorialists, and has one way or the other succeeded in getting the Municipality to recommend to Government the removal of your memorialists' houses on the ground of sanitation, and which said plea your memorialists beg to state is a misstatement and one suggested solely for the purpose of blinding the Government and injuring the poor and helpless. The fact of Mr. Coleman having asked certain houseowners near about his house to sell him certain houses, and the fact of his having offered to buy up the whole block of your memorialists' houses in the said report sent, your Lordship's Government has sufficient evidence to show that Mr. Coleman, to secure his own interest, stirred up the said report to remove your memorialists' houses. Your memorialists beg to state that, in the removal of your memorialists' houses, the public will not and cannot benefit the utmost, it can only be a personal benefit, the benefit of Mr. J. G. Coleman of the Municipality.

13. If your Lordship in Council has any doubt as to your memorialists' statements in this respect, your memorialists beg that an officer unconnected with the Local Municipal Board may be deputed to inspect the several parcherries in and about the town of Royapooram, and report to Government the removal of which particular parcherry is most essential and necessary for the public good and for the public health, and the state and cleanliness of your memorialists' houses to that of the two parcherries your memorialists have referred to.

14. In 1871, the Municipal Commissioners forcibly opened a road on the very grounds in which our privies and backyards were built, with a view that the inhabitants will run away of their own accord instead of suffering the misery they were exposed to. A few individuals were fined by the Magistrate for not removing the hedges of their privies and backyards, under the plea that the hedges being built with inflammable materials; upon which we wrote two petitions requesting the Municipal Commission to permit us to build our privies and backyards with brick walls. Up to this moment no reply has been sent to us, consequently we have been put by the Commissioners to great deal of misery and exposure which we think none of the subjects under British Government have suffered; yet by this your Lordship will observe that the Municipal Commission having, by means of fines, forced us to remove our privies and backyards, and yet they represented to Government that each hut has got one open privy; by this your Lordship will observe whether their statements are correct or not: instead of the Municipal Commissioners doing good to the subjects, they are doing things as they think proper; therefore we request your Lordship will be good enough to order the Municipal Commission to permit us to have our privies and backyards as heretofore.

15. We dare say that our ancestors were the implements in the hands of Government for gaining this country from the Nawabs and other powers, and a reference to the Marine Department will convince your Lordship as to the truth of our statement: we therefore request your Lordship to peruse the correspondence minutely connected with our ancestors and their removal from Chepauk and Lord Clive's Battery, and bestow on us a fresh site if your Lordship deem it necessary that we should be removed from our habitation.

16. Your memorialists have built their houses at some trouble and expense, and have possession of the same for the past seventy-three years, and more, and according to law, are sole proprietors of the land on which their houses are built, and which ground or site was given to them by Government in lieu of the one they originally held at Chepauk and Lord Clive's Battery, from whence they were directed to remove to their present abode, and which free site was given to them for the meritorious service rendered to the British Government by your memorialists' forefathers. Your memorialists will not and cannot here give a detailed account of such services, but suffice it to say that in 1758, when Lord Pigot was Governor, and Mr. Adam Master Attendant, Monsieur Lally besieged the garrison, and some of the Company's servants from fear emigrated into the interior of the country; but our ancestors, instead of doing so, removed themselves and their families into the fort, and were determined to show their attachment and loyalty to the British, and in those perilous times carried on their business in aid of the British Sovereign: and when Governor Moss at that time expressed a desire to be secretly conveyed to his family at Sadras, and which onerous and perilous duty our ancestors immediately and fearlessly undertook and executed with success; and, on their return from Sadras, the French suddenly seized them and their boats and loaded their boats with gunpowder and provisions and sent them under a Military guard to be taken to the French camp, but the heroic and loyal boatmen, not fearing the French soldiers, fell upon and fought them and brought the ammunition and provisions to the British camp. The British Government were highly pleased at their brave conduct and made them several presents and assured them of their everlasting friendship and protection for these and other services rendered to the British Government by your memorialists' ancestors: the Government were pleased to offer them a free site and compensation when they were directed to shift from Chepauk and Lord Clive's Battery, and also when the block-huts north of the Railway Terminus were removed by the Order of the Government annexed below, the Government were pleased to sanction compensation and a free site to the owners of those houses.

No. 71. *Order thereon, 14th July 1863, No. 817.*

"The Government consider that the clearance of the Boatmen's and Fishermen's huts from the sites mentioned would be a great sanitary improvement. Rupees (10,750) ten thousand seven hundred and fifty will therefore be placed at the disposal of the Municipal Commissioners with this object from the Public Works Funds of the year.

2. The portion of the esplanade referred to should be railed in and kept clear of all buildings. The rest of the ground when cleared should be sold by the Commissioners for building purposes under proper regulations as to the character of the buildings, &c.

3. The Commissioners will lay out the new site proposed to be given to the Boatmen and Fishermen in such a manner as will secure thorough ventilation and prevent overcrowding, &c."

(Signed) J. D. SIM,
Secretary to Government.

17. After this explanation, if the Government are still of opinion that memorialists' houses should be removed, they beg that compensation and a free site may

be granted to them. In seeking this privilege at your Lordship's hands, they are not asking too much or more than the nature of their case deserves as your memorialists have shown, and shown clearly, and with good evidence, that compensation and free sites have always been accorded to the boatmen and fishermen of Madras by the Government, from time to time, when they were ordered to remove from Chepauk and Lord Clive's Battery to their present abode on the grounds of sanitation; and your memorialists now beg that the same privilege may be accorded to them in the present case.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.

ROYAPOORAM,
29th April 1873.

(Signed) T. SOOBOOROY CHETTY,
(") T. APPASAWMY CHETTY,
and fifty-nine others.

Referred to the Acting Collector of Madras for inquiry and report in communication with the Municipal Commissioners.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Chief Secretary.

No. 284. From J. HUNTER-BLAIR, Esq., Collector of Madras, to the Hon. D. F. CARMICHAEL, Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George, dated Madras, 15th July 1874, No. 144.

I have the honor to report on the enclosed petition from certain boatmen and fishermen, referred to me for inquiry and report, in communication with the President of the Municipal Commission.

2. The petitioners' statements, that when they were removed from Chepauk to their present quarters, they were allowed free sites, and compensation for the removal of their houses, are proved by the records of this office, and they have also enjoyed up to date exemption from payment of quit-rent.

3. These concessions appear to have been repeated when some of the boatmen's houses, standing near the Railway Terminus, were removed by G.O. of 14th July 1863, No. 817.

4. I therefore think that petitioners' claims are reasonable, for although the sites now occupied by them are still entered in the accounts as Government property, yet they are in the enjoyment of petitioners, who cannot, I think, be ousted without compensation.

5. In a letter, dated 30th June 1874, No. 476, the President of the Municipal Commission states that a suitable site is available for the location of the petitioners in Cassimode, to the north of the public latrines, close to the beach, and now used as timber yards. This land is the property of private individuals, and will have to be purchased by Government.

6. It will be observed from the letter of the President of the Municipal Commission, recorded in G.O., dated 4th March 1873, No. 293, that Mr. Coleman proposed to pay the cost of the removal of houses, on plots A, if the ground is given to him at the average rate realized by plots already sold, or the actual cost

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Financial Department,
31st July 1874.*

of removing the huts. Government will, however, have to purchase ground to locate the petitioners (see paragraph 5), and if the owners of the ground know Government is in the market, the price will be certain to rise enormously. The best plan would therefore be to allow Mr. Coleman to purchase the ground required and exchange it with Government for the ground he wants: Government will then only have to pay compensation for the removal of the huts and houses.

7. I annex copies of letters of the President, Municipal Commission, and the Deputy Collector of Madras on the subject.

From R. RAGOONATH ROW, Deputy Collector of Madras, to J. HUNTER-BLAIR, Esq.,
Collector of Madras, dated Madras, 16th May 1874, No. 570.

In re-transmitting the petition which accompanied your docket,* No. 282, of the 17th May 1873, I beg to state that the statements of the

* The plan of land is herewith returned.
petitioners that they were removed by Government from Chepauk to Royapooram, that they were then allowed land to build their houses, and that no quit-rent was ever collected from them for the lands in their enjoyment, are borne out by the records of this office, *vide* Mr. Robertson's letter† to the Board, dated 16th May 1839,

† Herewith sent to be returned.
No. 35. Their claim for a new site and compensation for their buildings, in case they are to be removed from their present habitations, appears to be lawful and just, although the Government do not appear to have at any time given up their ownership of the soil on which the petitioners now reside. It is true that these huts are now so situated as to reduce the value of the property, such as Mr. Coleman's bungalow, and that their removal to further north is, on sanitary considerations, necessary; but, as boatmen, whether their removal to a great distance from the offices of the Marine Department is advisable, I am not competent to offer an opinion.

From J. G. COLEMAN, Esq., Officiating President, Municipal Commission, Madras, to
J. HUNTER-BLAIR, Esq., Collector of Madras, dated Madras, 30th June 1874, No. 476.

With reference to your letter, No. 380, dated 11th instant, I have the honor to inform you that a suitable site is available for the location of boatmen and fishermen in Cassimode, to the north of the public latrines, close to the beach, and now used as timber yards. The Government will have to compensate the parties for the removal of the huts, and pay for the land which is private property.

2. The Commissioners will lay out the new site proposed to be given to the boatmen and fishermen in such a manner as will secure thorough ventilation and prevent overcrowding, &c.

No. 285. ORDER THEREON, 31st July 1874, No. 1274.

The Government consider that any expense which it may be necessary to incur should be met from Municipal funds.

2. The claims of the petitioners to compensation and free sites are obviously well-founded.

(True Extract.)

Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Collector of Madras.
,, President of the Municipal Commission, Madras.

Rsd. W. H. French.

Bill of 1874 20/20/74.

FINANCIAL.

To THE COMMISSIONER OF LANDS,

Secy, Do., Gov.

Dated July, 21st.

Re: } Govt.

W. O. 21st July 1874, No. 1874.

W. O. 21st July 1874, No. 1874.

Notes: The President informed that the Government consider that any expense which it may be necessary to incur in the grant of compensation and free sites to the boatmen and fishermen at Portmoyon, whose huts have been cleared for sanitary purposes, should be met from Municipal funds.