M.R.O. 1—32,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 680 Press Mis.

46-47

Dated 16— 5— ~~19~~ 1859

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department, from 11th to 17th May 1859.

No. 46. Read the following letter from Captain G. M. BRUCE, Commandant Andaman Sebundy Corps; to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 6th May 1859, No. 31.

With reference to the Extract from the Minutes of Consultation, Judicial Department, under date the 12th March 1859, No. and subject as per margin, I have the honor, in continuation of my letter of the 17th March 1859, No. 20, to report for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, that the men of the Andaman Sebundy Corps have been put through a complete course of drill, blank firing and target practice included; and, that in my opinion, they are now qualified to proceed to their destination, whenever His Excellency may be pleased to order their embarkation I must, however, bring to your notice that with the exception of a Jemadar and 1 Naigue, none of the Native Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Staff applied for in my letters as per margin have joined, though they stand posted to the Corps in G. O. C. C. of the 26th March and 21st April 1859; under these circumstances, it will be for Government to decide whether the Sibbundies should be kept back pending the arrival of the Native Staff, or whether the individuals under reference could be caused to follow the Corps hereafter.

No. 330. Requests to be informed when the Corps will be ready for service in the Andamans.

16th December 1858 and 25th January 1859.

2. I respectfully beg to bring to your notice a circumstance which, by its importance, will no doubt meet with due consideration. The weapons with which the Corps has been armed, consist in a short Rifle with a Sword instead of a Bayonet, and the following reasons induced me to overlook the fact of the pieces being furnished with flint, instead of percussion locks, viz.

1st. The enemy with whom we were most likely to come into collison being ignorant of the use of iron, a flint lock Musket would, comparatively, be as superior to their bows and arrows as the Enfield Rifle is to the Matchlock.

2nd. The shortness of the piece rendered it better adapted for operations amongst bushes and jungles than a Musket of the ordinary length.

3rd. The Sword with which the Rifle was provided was a much more efficient weapon than a Bayonet, especially when used for side arm duties.

3. All these anticipated advantages have however, been thrown into the shade since our Rifle has been submitted to the test of blank and ball firing in which it has proved itself to be a most inefficient weapon, for owing, no doubt, to a want of hardness in the hammer, many of the pieces require to be repeatedly snapped before the priming will ignite, and in several others the priming had to be set fire to by other means.

No. 47. ORDER THEREON, 16th May 1859, No. 680.

The Adjutant General is requested to report to Government, at an early date, when the Sirdar and Non-Commissioned Officers, posted to the Andaman Sibbundy Corps, may be expected to join.

2. With respect to the description of fire arms with which the Corps are at present armed, it is to be remarked, that the men will not only have to be opposed to the Native inhabitants of the Andamans, but to guard the mutineers and other Convicts, who have been sent there. They should, therefore, be well armed. The Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines is requested to state, whether he could not provide them with a more efficient weapon.

3. From the monthly Return of the Corps for April last, it is seen that the two Buglers sanctioned, have not yet been entertained. These men should at once be sought out and added to the establishment.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. F. Cartledge.

No. 680.

The Adjutant Genl. is requested ~~to report~~ to report to Govt., at an early date, when the Sirdar & Non-Commissioned Officers, posted to the Andaman Sibbendy Corps, may be expected to join.

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3. Adverting to Exc: Mins: Cons: 8th April 1859, No. 487, it is observed that Mr. Bruce makes no mention of the families of the men who may be desirous to accompany them. Mr. Bruce will inform Govt. on this point at an early date.

4. From the monthly Return of the Corps for April last, it is seen that the two Buglers sanctioned, have not yet been entertained. These men should at once be sought out & added to the establishment.

Fort Saint George
16th May 1859.

JP

The Adjutant General with ~~the~~ Return for April - ~~to be returned~~.
" Inspector Genl. of O. & Magazines.
" Mily. Deptt. for record.
" Commandants of the Andaman Sibbendies.

Desp'd 19th

6th May 1859 Do

Your most obedient servant

G. M. Bruce Commandt

Andaman Penal Corps