

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1057	Press ~~Mis~~
40-41	Dated 3-7-1867

W/S

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
3rd July 1867.

No. 40. Read the following Proceedings of Government in the Public Works Department, dated 25th June 1867, No. 1893.

Sanctioning the repairs of certain Police Huts at Mercanum, South Arcot District. (Vide Proceedings, Public Works Department, dated 25th June 1867, Nos. 530—532).

No. 41. ORDER THEREON, 3rd July 1867, No. 1057.
To be recorded.

(Signed) R. S. ELLIS,
Acting Chief Secretary.

Exd. J. Tulloch.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
25th June 1867.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 530. From the Inspector General of Police, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madras, 17th May 1867, No. 834.

1. I beg your attention to the accompanying correspondence on the subject of the Police huts at Mercanum.

2. I inspected them myself while in process of construction, and had the Range Officer's attention drawn to the subject. He neglected to prevent the use of disgracefully bad materials, and already the buildings are almost uninhabitable, and will shortly be in ruins.

From the Acting Deputy Inspector General, Southern Range, to the Inspector General, M. Police, dated Camp at Tanjore, 13th May 1867.

1. I have the honour to forward, for such notice and orders as you may deem necessary, a report from the Assistant Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, regarding certain huts built by the Department Public Works for the Police at Mercanum. From this report you will see that the huts are almost, if not quite, uninhabitable; and that the Assistant Superintendent is of opinion that the damage done to the huts has been caused by the bad workmanship of the department that built the huts.

2. Attached are copies of two letters, one dated 14th April 1866, and the other 16th July 1866, from the Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, to the Range Officer of the Engineer's Department, who was constructing the huts. From these letters you will see that the attention of the latter Officer was called to the inferiority of the materials being used by the Overseer in the first letter before the huts were completed, and in the second when they were handed over to the Police. The Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, ~~was~~ handing over the huts in the state they were, but he was to do so doubtless from the great necessity there was for getting the Constables under cover, and because he thought that some attention would have been paid to his letter to the Range Officer under date 16th July 1866.

From the Assistant Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, to the Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, dated Tindivanam, 24th April 1867, No. 5.

1. I have the honour to report, for your information, that I have to-day inspected the Police huts at Shegal and Cundadco Salt stations built, I believe, last year by the Public Works Department.

2. I find these huts to be in a very ruinous state, but few of them are habitable; the tiles not being half burnt have freely admitted the rain, which has run on to the top of the walls, large portions of which have been washed away. I should say that if these huts are left in their present state till the next monsoon, a considerable portion of the roof will fall in.

3. I have carefully examined these huts, and find the portions of the walls washed away has been caused not by the rain beating from the outside, but by the excessive leakage of the roof.

From the Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, to the Sub-Engineer, 2nd Range, dated Cuddalore, 16th July 1866, No. 439.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 35, dated 26th June 1866, and to inform you that I have inspected the huts and taken charge of them, but I shall feel obliged by your directing the Maistry or Overseer to look at the tiling which appears to me to have been very carelessly put on.

From the Superintendent of Police, South Arcot, to the Sub-Engineer, 2nd Range, dated Cuddalore, 14th April 1866, No. 233.

1. Under instruction from the Inspector General of Police, I beg to draw your attention to the tiles which are being collected for the huts at Shegal, they are many of them of very inferior

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25th June 1867.

quality and not half burned, and the Inspector General fears that if they be used, the first heavy burst of weather will destroy numbers of them.

3. I am also directed to point to you that the partition walls between the different rooms in the line of huts at Cundadoo do not go right up to the roof; unless this is done there will be no privacy for the men, nor indeed, would these houses be safe. I shall therefore feel obliged by your directing that these walls be continued up to the roof before the buildings are handed over to me.

Referred to the Superintending Engineer of the 5th Division for report.

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,

Secretary to Government.

21st May 1867.

No. 531. Endorsement of the Superintending Engineer, 5th Division, dated Cuddalore, 7th June 1867, No. 48.

From the Assistant Engineer, No. 2 Range, South Arcot, to the Superintending Engineer, 5th Division, dated Tindevanum, 5th June 1867, No. 17.

1. In reply to your Memorandum No. 171, dated 22nd May 1867, I have

1 Endorsement of Government on the Inspector General's letter with four enclosures, returned.

the honour to inform you that I have inspected the two blocks of Police huts at Mercanum, and beg to submit the following remarks.

2. In December 1834, the Superintendent of Police requested me to forward an estimate for the construction of two blocks of huts, one at Cundadoo and one at Shegal, with mud walls, tiled roof, projecting well over the walls, but no verandah. Each block to consist of 15 huts, of dimensions given. An estimate of Rupees 1,380, or Rupees 46 per hut, was submitted, sanctioned in due course, and the work completed in April 1866. The sites for the huts were selected by the Assistant Superintendent of Police. My opinion as to the huts themselves, or the sites for them, was neither asked for, nor given.

3. The work was done on contract. Mud walls eight feet high and two feet thick, with a Malabar roof, covered with pan-tiles, and a door and a window for each hut. The contractor had to cart clay for the walls three miles, and tiles for the roof from a much greater distance. The tiles were of the ordinary kind used in the villages, not of the first sort certainly, for they cannot be made within a reasonable distance, but they were not bad. Owing to the colour of the clay, some appeared to be only half burned. The best materials procurable at the price were used on these huts, and the partition walls between each room were carried up to the top of the roof, as requested in a letter from the Superintendent of Police.

4. The block of huts at Cundadoo is built near the west bank of the back-water, near the high road, and near to the salt pans. The block at Shegal stands on high ground, overlooking the pans at that place, and probably a desire for proximity between huts and pans may have led to a selection of the ground.

5. During a heavy monsoon the low ground near the back-water is submerged. Last November the water rose up to two feet above the flooring of the Police huts, and the occupants had of course to vacate. The huts at Shegal are on high ground, and not liable to be affected with water from below. Still the two sites

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are decidedly unsuitable for structures of this kind. There is nothing between the open sea and these two blocks of huts to break the force of the north-east monsoon. In such exposed situations, mud walls and a common roof without verandah can have little chance of safety. On looking over the places, I found that the wind and rain we had last year acting under the eaves, had displaced many of the tiles, making the roof a sort of a sieve, and had damaged the walls in places, not many. Not more than one-half of the huts are now habitable under rain, and another monsoon would bring them all down if left as they are.

5. I had the contractor with me during the inspection, and although I don't blame the man in any way, yet he offers, at his own cost, to repair damages in the walls, and to make the roof watertight by the 20th of next month. This offer has been accepted. All these huts would be a little safer if they had verandahs all round; still even with this protection they would not be sufficiently substantial for the exposed positions they occupy. It would be better, far better, to build new blocks of huts in a more sheltered situation. More suitable at the same time for the comfort and real necessity of those who have to occupy them, than to expend more money on the present lot. All the materials could be used again, except the mud walls.

Submitted to Government, with reference to their endorsement of the 21st May 1867 on a letter from the Inspector General of Police.

(Signed) F. A. FOTHERGILL, Lieut. Colonel, R. E.,
Superintending Engineer, 5th Division.

No. 532.

ORDER THEREON, 25th June 1867, No. 1,893.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 63.

1. These papers have reference to certain Police huts which were constructed in 1866 at Mercanum in the

South Arcot District on an estimate of Rupees 1,380 sanctioned in G. O. No. 1,399 of the 23rd May 1865.

2. The Inspector General of Police represents that owing to the use of bad materials the huts are now "almost uninhabitable and will shortly be in ruins," while the Range Officer explains that the failure is attributable to the style of building being unsuited to the exposed situation selected for the huts, and to the very inferior materials provided for in the estimate.

3. So long as buildings for the accommodation of the Police continue to be constructed of the ordinary and perishable materials which are now constantly employed, the Government must be prepared for early and repeated expenditure for repairs.

4. The Government cannot, however, exonerate Lieutenant Graham from the charge of serious neglect in permitting huts to be erected in a position liable to be inundated, and others in a site seriously exposed to the action of the weather, without reporting these material inconveniences for the consideration of Government. Nor can Lieutenant Graham be excused in regard to the material used in the construction of the huts, which must have been bad even in reference to the category to which they belong, for otherwise it is not to be credited that the

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contractor would show so much promptitude in the repair of the buildings. The Government, while signifying their displeasure to Lieutenant Graham, sanction the temporary repair of these buildings without the construction of verandahs, and will take into consideration the erection of more substantial habitations in a proper situation.

(True Extract.)

Colonel R. E.
Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 5th Division.
" Judicial Department.
" Inspector General of Police.

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hit of 16 July

For 25 June 1867

Received 1867 July 14

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*For Govt of Madras
No 1895*

*21/8 June
1867*

No 1397

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