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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Judicial

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.		Press.
B.P. No.	364	Mis.
Dated	4.3.1868	197.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Archives I—10,006—19-4-79.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
4th March 1868.*

No. 38. Read the following Proceedings of Government in the Public Works Department, dated 24th February 1868, No. 615.

Ordering the provision of funds for the alterations sanctioned to the Subsidiary Jail at Sattiamungalum in Coimbatore District. (Vide Proceedings, Public Works Dept., dated 24th Feb. 1868, Nos. 545 & 546).

No. 39. ORDER THEREON, 4th March 1868, No. 364.

Communicated to the Magistrate of Coimbatore and to the Committee on Subsidiary Jails.

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

To the Magistrate of Coimbatore.
,, Committee on Subsidiary Jails.

P. R. Handeman.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
18th February 1868.*

No. 206. Read the following letter from P. GRANT, Esq., Magistrate of Coimbatore, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Coimbatore, 31st January 1868, No. 20.

I have the honor to forward copy of a letter from my Acting Head Assistant Magistrate, suggesting certain improvements to the existing Subsidiary Jail at Sattimungalam, constructed under the sanction of Government noted in the margin. Mr. Galton is of opinion that reapers should be fixed on the cross beams, through the whole length of the building, so as to render the Jail more secure. He further proposes the division of the building into three wards, the removal of the present solid door, and the substitution in its stead of one with iron bars. He also proposes to fix a ventilator to improve the ventilation. All these improvements seem necessary, and I accordingly recommend them for the approval of Government.

19th November 1866, No. 1834.

2. An estimate on this account is herewith forwarded.

From C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Magistrate of Coimbatore, to the Magistrate of Coimbatore; dated Sattimungalam, 15th June 1867, No. 21.

I have the honor to submit my report on the Subsidiary Jail at this station, accompanied with a form containing the information called for by the Inspector General of Jails, copy of which was forwarded to me with your letter of 14th May, No. 32. I have drawn up a form as being the most convenient mode of embodying

2. The building at present used as a Subsidiary Jail is nothing but a space 14 feet in breadth, and 16 feet in depth, and 8 feet in height within the Taluk Cutcherry, separated from the rest of the building by wooden bars reaching from the roof to the ground; these bars are about 6 inches apart, and transverse bars cross them at intervals. A wall separates this space into two wards, one set apart for males and the other for females.

3. The male ward is 14 feet by 11 feet, and contains 1232 feet of cubical space; the female ward is 14 feet by 5 feet, and contains 560 feet of cubical space; accordingly there is accommodation in the former for two prisoners, and in the latter for one only.

4. On Friday, 7th instant, the date of inspection, I found only two prisoners in confinement, they were both convicted males; there were no under-trial prisoners, and no females.

5. Since the date of my inspection, however, a gang of dacoits has been brought in, numbering 15 persons, and 16 prisoners have been sentenced by the Sub-Magistrate to imprisonment in another case.

6. The consequence is that many of them have to be kept under guard outside the wards, it being utterly impossible to accommodate so many in so small a space.

7. With regard to the means of ventilation, there is only one small window 1½ feet square in the outer wall of the female ward; in the male ward there is no opening of any sort in the wall, consequently there can be no current of air; the inmates of the wards are dependent for light and air solely on the space between the wooden bars which separate them from the Taluk Cutcherry; accordingly the only air they get is the hot air from the Cutcherry.

8. The wards appeared to be clean, but as a natural consequence of imprisoning human beings day after day within confined limits through which a free current of air never passes, a strong odour pervaded the place. I found a chatty containing urine in a corner of the male ward, the presence of which must necessarily create an unpleasant odour. As the space is so confined I think the prisoners should invariably be taken outside the Jail during the day for all purposes of nature.

The convicted appeared to be in good health, they had only been in confinement a few days at the date of inspection.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
18th February 1868.*

10. Having now noticed in detail all the points connected with the wards at present used as a Subsidiary Jail, which call for special mention, I will proceed to report upon the building which has recently been erected in accordance with instructions received from the late Acting Magistrate in his letter dated 4th December 1866, No. 251.

11. The building in question consists of one long room, measuring 72 feet long, 9 feet broad, and 12½ feet in height, and its cubical contents are 6963 feet. It is composed of thick mud walls 9 feet in height, 2 feet in thickness, with a thatched roof, and a small verandah 4½ feet broad in front; there is one door in the centre of strong wood, and two windows secured with iron bars are let into the front wall, measuring 2 feet by 1½ feet; allowing 36 feet for each prisoner, the superficial area suffices for 18 prisoners, and allowing 500 feet of space to each, there will be accommodation for 14. Rupees 250 have been expended in constructing this building.

12. I regret to have to state that, notwithstanding this large expenditure, the building as it at present stands is utterly unfit for the purpose for which it was constructed. It would have been far more satisfactory if a plan had first been submitted for sanction, but the work was emergent and the Tahsildar was directed to construct huts at once if he could not rent a suitable building.

13. The first great fault is entire absence of ventilation, the only means of ventilation are the two windows measuring 2 feet by 1½ feet; as there is no opening on the other side of the building, no free current of air can pass through. The door being of solid wood, no air is admitted that way, the natural consequence is that the building is insufferably hot, in fact even more so than the wards in the Taluk Cutcherry.

14. Secondly, there is no separation of classes or sexes, the whole building consisting of only

ordinary thatched one, and the prisoner could easily, with the help of a companion, mount on one of these cross beams, and from there quietly cut through the roof at night.

16. The Superintendent of Police, who was with me at the time, most strongly urges this objection to the building. I am sure a prisoner determined on escaping would make his way out through the roof with very little difficulty, and easily make good his escape unless the guard happened to be on the alert.

17. I think the building might be made suitable for the confinement of prisoners by a considerable additional expenditure, and the remedies for the defects, which I beg to suggest, are as follows.

18. I would remove the solid door and substitute an open door secured by iron bars. I would also put up two additional doors of a similar kind, and erect two cross walls inside so as to form three wards, with a separate door for each. I would divide the length of the building into unequal portions, the ward allowed to under-trial males being 36 feet by 9 feet so as to accommodate 9 prisoners, the ward for convicted males being 28 by 9 feet so as to accommodate 7 prisoners, and the female ward being 8 feet by 9 feet so as to accommodate 2 prisoners.

19. The two windows which at present exist I would remove and insert them in the gables one at each end of the building, the two additional doors taking the place of the windows. I would further improve the ventilation by inserting into the wall, opposite the doors, a ventilator, secured by iron bars 18 feet in length and 10 inches in depth, so as to allow of a free current of air passing through the wards. The windows and ventilator should, of course, be placed so high up as to be out of reach of the inmates of the Jail.

20. The adoption of these improvements would, I think, provide a sufficient remedy for the first two defects noticed.

21. With a view to increasing the security of the Jail, the Superintendent of Police suggests that the iron or jungle wood reapers should be fixed firmly on the cross beams through the length of the building, at intervals of about a span, so as to prevent the prisoners from getting on the beams and effecting their escape through the roof.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
18th February 1868.*

22. This would not interfere with the ventilation, whilst at the same time it would render the building far more suitable as a place of confinement for prisoners.

23. I forward herewith two estimates for Rupees 380, the expenditure which it will be necessary to incur if my suggestions are approved of; unless a considerable sum is expended on the building it cannot be rendered fit for use as a Subsidiary Jail.

No. 207. ORDER THEREON, 18th February 1868, No. 261.

Under the circumstances represented in the foregoing letter, the Governor in Council sanctions the further outlay of Rupees (380) three hundred and eighty, for rendering the Subsidiary Jail, built last year at Sattimungalam, temporarily suitable for the confinement of prisoners.

2. Mr. Grant will furnish to Government an explanation of the delay that has occurred in disposing of this matter, which was of an emergent character. It is observed that the Acting Head Assistant Magistrate Mr. Galton's letter to the District Magistrate Mr. P. Grant is dated the 15th June 1867, and that no action was taken thereon until the 8th January 1868.

3. The construction of the Subsidiary Jail at Sattimungalam seems to have been left entirely to the Tahsildar by the late Acting Magistrate of the District, and there is nothing to show that any proper instructions were issued by that Officer to the Tahsildar, or that there was any plan sanctioned for this building.

4. As there appears to be a considerable number of prisoners of all classes passing through this Subsidiary Jail, it is very desirable that no further time should be lost in framing plans and estimates for a permanent building.

5. The papers above recorded will be forwarded to the Subsidiary Jail Committee, with a request that they will, in communication with the Magistrate of the Coimbatore District, report to Government as to the extent and nature of the Subsidiary Jail accommodation required at Sattimungalam.

6. Orders will be issued in the Public Works Department for the provision of the necessary funds for the alterations required in the existing building.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Magistrate of Coimbatore.

Subsidiary Jail Committee.

Public Works Department, with estimate.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
24th February 1868.*

No. 545. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Judicial Department:—

Sanctioning, with remarks, an estimate of Rs. }
380 for alterations to the Subsidiary Jail at } (Here enter 18th February 1868, No. 261.)
Sattimungalam in the Coimbatore District.

No. 546. ORDER THEREON, 24th February 1868, No. 615.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 72.

Communicated to the Superintending Engineer of the 7th Division, who will provide the funds required for the immediate execution of the alterations sanctioned by Government.
(True Extract.)



Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, with Estimate.
Accountant General.
Controller of Public Works Accounts.
Judicial Department.

P. R. Banderman.

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