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Salt Colaur's Murder Case

Recording reports by the Commr. of Police re the ______

Jud.

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POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

CONFIDENTIAL.

9

Madras 19th June 1891

My dear Price

Salt Cotaurs Murder Case

We have experienced the greatest difficulty in getting any information from the Salt officials in respect to the recent case of Homicide at the Salt Cotaurs. In fact I may say that we have not only not been assisted but have been misled and met with covert opposition. The case appeared a very simple one. There was no doubt even on the minds of the Salt officers that one man was shot dead and another grievou wounded by some one or more of the peons at the Salt Cotaurs. The evidence showed that the Salt peons had seized two perfectly innocent persons dragged them inside the Salt depot and there ill treated them. The friends of the prisoners naturally collected outside the gate and clamoured for the release of the prisoners. The Salt peons sallied out with threats the crowd fled. One (blank) shot was fired and subsequently two more shots were wantonly fired a

Two men tried for this by Mr. Sultan Mohideen - One acquitted - other got 2 months R.I.

the Street into the small knot of people 60 yards from the gate. The Second Shot killed one man dead. The third Shot Shattered a lads arm. The firing was wilful and wanton as the peons retired into the depôt and deliberately loaded with ball then came out and as wilfully and deliberately fired at the distant people. The deceased was Shot through the back to front so there could be no Excuse of any apprehension of immediate danger the crowd had fled and apparently his victim was still fleeing. Two Carbines were found to have been recently discharged and one Salt peon was deficient of all his blank Cartridges and caps but Strange to say by the time the Salt Inspector and police Examined the ammunition pouches of those present all the bullets which should have been present were there at least so says Mr (Salt) Inspector Borgen. Mr Borgen assured us he had Examined all ammunition and carbines in use and with the Exception already mentioned all were correct. He informed us that only 25 bullets were in use and 25 bullets were present. I should mention that the bullets and powder cartridges are kept separate. Each Sentry has 5 Cartridges (blank) of which one is loaded into the Carbine. 8 caps and 5 loose bullets tied in a rag to correspond to the 5 Cartridges and to be used only in an Emergency when a bullet can be run down over the powder already in the carbine.

Seeing that considerable inconvenience might be caused by detaining in custody all those present at the post when the firing took place we only confined one man who admittedly had fired his carbine trusting to the Salt officers to make any further necessary Enquiries as they would best be able to do. During the inquest the Depy Comr. Mr Sneyd and Asst Comr. Mr Fowler with Salt Inspr Borgen attended each day and seemed – Especially Mr. Fowler – to regard the Enquiry as if not a personal reflection Certainly one on their Dept. which they resented.

Only one single Peon out of the number there would admit that he knew anything whatever of what occurred in regard to the firing and when this Peon gave his Evidence it was manifestly a surprise and distasteful and note books were at once whipped out the means &c apparently noted down and Mr. Fowler was very Eager to know how this man came to be called. However that was the last wit: we got from the Salt Dept. for it was Evident what was Expected if they spoke out.

After the inquest another man directly implicated was taken into Custody. I was informed that the Salt Officers objected to the Police making any Enquiries among their men Except through those Officers – Believing that these officers would act loyally and use their best Endeavours in the interests of justice.

I instructed the Police to leave it to the Salt Officers to obtain the necessary information seeing that they were in a much better position than we were to get at the truth and test any statements by their knowledge of the rules and routine of their department.

The points were simple, namely to verify the ammunition actually present by what should be forthcoming – If that was correct or said to be so, where did the ammunition come from which undoubtedly was expended that night? and how was this Expenditure balanced – Who loaded the ball Carbines fired and where were those bullets obtained? – and finally who went out and fired? Seeing that there were three petty officers and 8 or 10 peons of various grades and none others present when these various operations were being carried out inside the gate it should not have been difficult – and would not have been had the superior officers shown any real desire to be informed – to ascertain the above and from the circumstances the knowledge was confined to the Dept. On the night of the occurrence a Jemadar Sooposamy made a Statement in presence of his Inspector that he saw Peon Durmaji Row fire and was within 3 or 4 feet of him when he did so. This he repeated to following day pointing out the exact positions of himself and Darmaji. When examined at the inquest and after the appearance of his other Superiors he contradicted his previous Statements and denied having seen who fired — He has in fact made three contradictory statements but no notice was taken by his Superiors of his conduct at least none in reprehension thereof — He was the Senior Officer of the Dept. present at the occurrence.

I omitted to mention that when I was at the place the day following a bullet was picked up just inside the gate where the Salt peons were assembled before sallying out to slaughter — thus there must have been at least three extra bullets procured to make up the complement and that too on the spur of the moment and therefore from somewhere within the Salt depôt. Salt Inspr. Borgen pretended that this bullet so found was not similar to the bullets issued to his men and although it was pointed out by a Police Sub Inspr. as it lay at his feet and mine and he saw it picked up at the inquest when questioned he said — a bullet was said to have been

found lying on the ground inside the gate. He maintained it was not similar to the regulation bullets and seemed inclined to insinuate that the Police had put it there! When I subsequently put that same bullet with others received from him as being regulation he could not distinguish it —

However at the beginning I had no suspicion that this Inspr. and his immediate Superiors would not do their utmost to get at the truth — The straightforward Statement made by the one peon who had ventured to speak out raised a doubt as to whether it was Durmaji Row or the other man Appadoray who fired the fatal shot and it was of the highest importance not only to the prosecution but to the accused to get a true account of what really occurred inside that closed gate and unquestionably the Salt Officers could easily have got this information — As the result to the wounded man was uncertain and it would be some time before the medical men could pronounce him to be out of danger and fit for judicial examination I left the Salt Offrs. to take their own time and measures to investigate the matters for which, it seemed to me, they were accountable.

As time went on and to all Enquiries we received the same answer, no results, while at the same time I discovered that the keenest interest was taken in the doings of the Police and what progress they may have made I became suspicious. Mr. Lloyd the Dy. Comr. (Salt) appeared to be very anxious that the necessary evidence should be obtained and he visited the Depot frequently as I understood to further the Enquiry. I must do Mr. Fowler, the Asst. Salt Comr., the justice of saying that at no time did he appear anxious or to desire that evidence should be forthcoming and my belief is that he, *perhaps* unconsciously, influenced his *subordinates*. Mr. Borgen when asked maintained that he had made immediate examination of all ammunition in or out of store used with the exception of Dwarkaji Row's four blank cartridges and except all was in order. He was quite sure that only 25 bullets were in use with the men of his command and specified how these were distributed. These 25 bullets were still present. The ammunition in store he said was in soldered tin boxes which again were in wooden cases screwed down. He counted them all.

^ not? HLS

This apparently accounts for the powder at any rate 1 blank & 2 ball shots when fired. What became of the 4 cartridges?

Did he unscrew the boxes & ascertain if any had been opened?

Seeing that we were getting no assistance from the Salt Officers and also that no attempt was being made to bring the petty officers or peons to realize that unless they had *all* conspired to kill one or more of the inhabitants of the town it was their duty to say what passed before their eyes, and the petty officers especially were responsible, I began to look about for a cause for this reticence. I was presently informed that several peons could give valuable evidence but, rightly or wrongly, they were under the impression that if they came forward it would be displeasing to their immediate superiors and they would be marked men. The one man who had spoken out found his position very uncomfortable. I tested this information. I found that special reports were sent by Salt Insp. Borgen as to what enquiries were made by police. Our Inspector hearing that two men named could give information sent for them by another Salt peon. This became known to Insp: Borgen who forthwith had these men up. Took a written explanation from the man who had dared to take the message and reported the matter to his Asst. and

These should be called for L.G.

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This also

Depy. Commr. this man was promptly given to understand that a transfer to some other less congenial place would be likely.

I told Mr. Sneyd that his men were afraid to give evidence but he pooh-poohed the idea. Any way he could not deny that they could give evidence but were not doing so. He was also informed that the Jemadar Soopoosamy who had already made so many false statements was intimidating the others and preventing any effective enquiries. Mr. Sneyd was also told the same by the Dy. Commr. of Police in presence of Mr. Fowler and seemed disposed to remove this obstacle but Mr. Fowler made a remark which altered his apparent intention.

At last so convinced was I that justice was being purposely thwarted that I ordered the Police to act independently of the Salt Officers altogether and having been confirmed in my suspicions that undue influence was bearing on those who only could tell us the truth, on the 4th of this month (June) having given the Salt officers a month to elicit the facts from their men I went to Mr. Pole the Salt Commr. and told him the state of the case and asked for his assistance and interference. When I entered his room I told him I had come to consult him in

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[redacted]

respect to this occurrence. He said nothing but smiled as much as to say he was not unprepared to be informed that no progress had been made so far as his Dept. was concerned. I said that we could get no information as to what passed in the Depot when the carbines were loaded and fired or as to where the ammunition was procured. He simply shrugged his shoulders and said "That is your business". I said that as the Salt officials objected to the Police making enquiries among the Salt peons except through them I had willingly left it to those Salt officials to obtain the information we required and which Salt officers alone could furnish. He astonished me by saying that when he visited the Factory the day following (he said he was the first on the spot) and found that the murder had been committed outside and the other attendant circumstances he had given personal orders to both (Salt) Supt. Borgen and to the Dy. Commr. Mr. Sneyd that they were to have nothing to say to the matter but to leave the Police to do as they pleased! He said it was no departmental matter in which he or his officers were concerned.

A

W. Borgen

I suggested that surely the shooting of people in the streets with Govt. arms and ammunition was a matter for notice of the Deptt. entrusted with those arms for a very different purpose but he said that if Salt peons chose to go out into the street and shoot people that was for the police to deal with and no departmental matter even though they abused the Govt. arms and ammunition in their charge. I confessed that this view of the case by the Head of the Deptt. took me completely by surprise and that had we only known this before we would have acted very differently ~~and~~ saved much time and prevented much mischief which I feared it was now too late to remedy. Why, if those were the orders given, did not Salt Inspr. Borgen Mr. Sneyd and Mr. Fowler not at once say that they were precluded from interfering instead of misleading us into withholding interference?

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X

I then told Mr. Pole that the Salt peons were afraid to give evidence under the impression that by doing so they would incur the displeasure of their I told superiors. Mr. Pole said that impression

should be removed and ordered Mr. Sneyd to go to the Factory and explain to the men that there was no cause for fear of ill consequences to any who came forward to state what he knew in the case. Mr. Sneyd proposed to instruct Mr. Borgen to this effect but I doubted the efficacy of this deputation. I said all I now wanted was an assurance ~~of~~ protection for any witnesses and that as I now perceived no assistance was to be expected from the department the police must commence de novo on their own account.

On 5th June Mr. Sneyd visited the Salt Golahs and explained to his men the instructions of the Salt Commissioner but it was uphill work to remove the impression already conveyed.

The first difficulty we had to face was the allegation that all the bullets in use were forthcoming and that no more were in possession or said to be. The first suggestion made by Inspr. Borgen was that gravel stones had been used in the carbines. The medical evidence disproved this. Then it was contended that one bullet both killed deceased and wounded the other man. On what this theory is based I have as yet been unable to ascertain. Mr. Borgen

Why shd. he make this?

was and is very confident of this and even Mr. Crole announced this as his opinion also gathered from the reports made to him. The evidence given at the inquest and so far as we can get is distinctly opposed to this opinion and proves that there were two distinct shots each having a damaging result one fatal. The only conclusion I can come to is that the Sett. Officers are in possession of some information withheld from us. I have asked on 8th to see any statements made or taken by Mr. Borgen relative to this fatal occurrence as I have received no reply notwithstanding X a reminder I anticipate a refusal in which case I will have probably to appeal to Govt.

We have now discovered that we have either wilfully or through culpable ignorance of their duties been entirely misled. [We were lulled into believing B that Mr. Borgen was really taking obvious steps to check his stock of ammunition and endeavouring to get trustworthy evidence whereas he did not as he alleged examine all the ammunition in use that night and so far from encouraging free speech he made no inquiries and pooh-poohed valuable information and hints given to him.

B

X Statements have been made to me confidentially which if true are very compromising to Mr. Borgen. If the Sett. Officers really desired to make an enquiry effective they should have at once suspended the petty officers and men at that post instead of allowing them as we now find time and opportunity to make away with evidence. The finding of the unused bullet on the ground inside the gate and the fact of two more at least having been fired showed that the allegation of the presence of all the bullets which should be forthcoming was manifestly incorrect.

Immediately we took the matter into our hands I ordered stock to be taken, I confess more as matter of form at this late stage, of all the ammunition. We found the statement that the reserve ammunition was all secured in soldered tin cases was untrue as many cases were opened. However the quantity agreed with the books. We were again assured that no more than 25 bullets were in use by sentries and treasure escorts and the allotment for each post was repeated and 25 bullets accounted for. I was assured there was not and never was any

Register or Entry in which these 25 bullets were entered as they were a constant quantity and bullets were never expended like powder Cartridges which were withdrawn weekly from Carbines kept loaded (with powder only not capped) by sentries. The mystery was great as the two bullets fired and the one dropped in the dark that night must have been replaced on the spot. ||

X

We now find that Mr Borgen did not as alleged examine the ammunition of all the sentries or posts that night only those at the place where the shots were fired – We find that the Jemadar did have a register in which the bullets in use were entered and that book has now disappeared. || Mr Borgen produced to me a piece of paper showing only (omitting bullets) blank cartridges caps &c. apparently not long in use and said that was the only record the Jemadar had. I find that it was not until Tuesday 5th that Mr Borgen made any attempt to check his ammunition. I was assured that only one set of 5 bullets were kept in a pouch in the guard room for use

*Case occurred night of 2nd

by him!

B

B

by treasure escorts although never less than ten armed peons accompanied treasure.

I discovered that this information was false that there were always two sets of ammunition (5 bullets – 5 cartridges & caps each set = 10 bullets – 10 cartridges 16 caps) were kept in readiness in two pouches in the guard room for use of treasure escorts and that there were in addition to the 4 sets for the 4 "posts" or sentries. Thus the total of bullets which were in actual use was 30 and not 25 as insisted upon – Only 25 could be produced and that this was the correct number was maintained until we fished up 5 more bullets from the canal where the Jemadar admits he threw them there may be more there but it is very muddy and they have been lying there nearly a month – I had received information that a handful of cartridges and bullets were found in the Jemadars desk when search was being made for the register which has disappeared and the Jemadar snatched them away – He admits this and that he threw them into the canal – I had

This was the full tale!

Note – Jemadar Lachmich in his statement or deposition before Col: Watson shows how he took over charge of 42 bullets how 1 was lost & how he made over 41 to his successor.

also received information that there were spare bullets besides the two sets for treasury guard and that the number expended that night were made up from these. So it has proved.

B

We have been put to much trouble and Govt. to expense to get information and evidence which as one of their own men said to me three weeks before could have been got by the superior officers if they wished to do so in five minutes.

who!

I am quite sure that if I had been told that some of the police of a station had in the presence of three, or even one, Head Constable sallied out and shot a man I would very soon find out who had fired and where the ammunition came from or make more petty officers smart for it. There was a story among the salt peons of one spare bullet being in a desk – Where did the Salt Officers get this idea of one bullet doing all the damage? If they heard this story and they did why did they not communicate it at

once to the police and follow it up?

If I have to appeal to Govt. to get necessary information I hope they will order all reports made to the Salt Officers of any grade to be given to me.

Why if the dept. was considered so uninterested in the proceedings was it necessary for this close watch on communications with the police and the special reports to Asst & Dy (Salt) Commissioner?

Even now I believe that those who are giving evidence are unfavourably regarded and those who are manifestly and openly lying are in no way discouraged

Yours sincerely

Tweedon

The Honble. W. J. Price C

Chief Secy.

The origin of the ill feeling between the salt peons & fishermen was the levying of blackmail from persons fishing in the canal. The peons claim half profits & if refused prosecute for trespass.

CONFIDENTIAL. No. 268

Do.

Do. CONFIDENTIAL.

From Commissioner of Police

To Honble Mr. J. D. Price
Chief Secy

Dated 19th June }
Recd. } 1891

CHIEF SECRETARY
22 JUN 91
GOVERNMENT O

Salt Cotaur Murder Case

Confidential report on difficulties experienced in investigation of —

P.T.O

9.6.91 - 1095 Judl.
19.3.91 - 931 Judl.
781 / 2.6.89. S.C

C. No. 272 & 268 & 280.

The Hon'ble Mr. Stokes C.S.I.
The Hon'ble Mr. Garstin C.S.I.

For Orders.

C.S.
22.6.

24 June.

25 June

Col. Weldon's charges ~~[illegible]~~ obstruction on the part of the Salt Dept., and his statements evidence the fact that this attitude was encouraged & countenanced by Messrs. Cole & Sheyd. ~~[illegible]~~ Their attitude towards the police enquiry seems to have been very reprehensible. ~~So~~ Far from obstructing they should of course have done everything in their power to aid the police in discovering the truth. But we cannot arrive at a ~~[illegible]~~ decision until we have heard Mr. Cole & his subordinates in reply. I don't think that any steps should be taken in the matter until the case is over. It is to be charged on Monday. If then Col. Weldon repeats his charges in a more formal manner, we can call the department to account.

27 June

J. H. G.
27/6/91

Order 30. VI. 91. No. 1287.
Recorded
(From Orders)

C.S.
29. VI.

30 June

29 June

C. 26/6
29/6

No. 2.

CONFIDENTIAL. No. 280

POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Madras 24th June 1891

My dear Price

Salt Cotaur Murder Case

I said I did not believe I had got all the reports that passed between Salt Inspr. Borgen and his Asst. and Depy. Commr. Here is another batch of what I may call side lights which I would like you to see as it illustrates the under current against us. Every step we take carefully watched and reported - why? Is it any wonder that the ignorant peons fear to say anything when the feeling of their superiors is so manifest? Throughout not a word is said or asked on the vital points which the Salt Officers should be able to clear up, namely who made use of the ball ammunition and how was the expenditure made good:

2. Having been assured that all the bullets which should be present were 25 and they were present I can now prove that there should have been 42 - Of the difference 2 were fired away - 1 was found lying inside the gate - 5 were recovered from

T

the canal and 25 they now produce total accounted for now = 32 so that 8 bullets are still missing, no doubt they are still in the river but could not be recovered. It is absurd to imagine that had they chosen to do so the Salt Officers could much more easily have ascertained what ammunition was really in use or possession than we could. The disappearance of the Register in which the original quantities were entered should in itself with them as it did with us - have raised a suspicion that further Enquiry was necessary - Mr. Borgen assured me that this register or account was not an official record but merely a memo: kept by the Jemadar for his private satisfaction: I can prove that it was a book regularly kept and bearing the Official Seal of the Dept. The Sub-Insp.r (Salt) Erow in charge of the ammunition, and who has been here for three years, gravely assured me that until this occurrence he did not know that his guards and sentries had ball ammunition at all!!

3. Now as to these papers - the one I have marked XI requires notice. When I found that the evidence would not directly connect the Jemadar Coopoosamy with the actual

murder I said there was no reason why he and the other petty officer who by illegally arresting and confining the two innocent men were really the cause of the disaster should not be proceeded against by the Complainants. Summonses were accordingly taken out. After issue of summons this Jemadar came to Inspector Saminatha Pillay who is one of those investigating the murder case and begged him to help him saying that he was prepared to make a full statement of what occurred. Saminatha Pillay very wisely declined to record any statement and told this Jemadar that if he had anything to say he could write it himself and he would submit it to his superiors - The Jemadar did write and give a long statement admitting among other matters that there was spare ammunition in his desk and he had made away with it - We had other evidence of this clear and the Jemadar knew this. The Inspector reported at once to me but I declined to interfere with the case pending against this Jemadar as if we did so the man would at any moment turn round and declare

Either that he made the Statement under threat of prosecution or under promise of relief from prosecution – However as the man said he would point out where he had thrown the ammunition I said he should be allowed to do so and the place should be carefully searched by divers if necessary. To tell the truth I had little hope of finding anything but we might be asked why we had not made the attempt – Only five bullets were recovered. The powder of course had disappeared – If you now turn to the document marked |VIII| ~~&c~~ (last portion) in which Mr Borgen reports this finding of the bullets you will see the significant question Mr Borgen says he put to Insp^r Simpson as to dropping the case against the Jemadar – Finding that was not so sure Mr Borgen proceeds to throw suspicion on the find – ~~I am informed it is not true that Mr Fowlers' boat was moored at that place but it is a good suggestion~~.

I believe there is some doubt as to exact position of the boat – but the bullets were not found for 1/2 an hour.

4. The whole of this is a plant – When the Jemadar was warned to answer the charge it was arranged he would make a Statement; then if the charge were withdrawn he would snap his fingers in our face and say he

was coerced or cajoled and wrote as the Police required – He probably thought that it was very unlikely any of the bullets would be recovered.

5. I declined to interfere with the prosecution launched as this man had already told so many falsehoods both to us and his own officers that although he might suit them he would not suit us. On the 14th the bullets were recovered.

6. Salt Peon Abboyee Raju No. 94. was the first and only man who came forward at the inquest and gave evidence of what occurred at the gate of the Depot that night – He was glared at and now you will see by document |X| that he is noted for dismissal – The fact was he was afraid to go back to his lines after attending the Police Office.

7. But I have graver charges against these Salt officials – There are two independent witnesses who were standing outside the gate and saw all that passed – They described two men who came out with guns – One in uniform fired what was manifestly a blank charge in the air and across the road – The other taller man in plain clothes fired a second

Shot straight down the road. The same tall man then took the other gun from the man in uniform stepped back, knelt down, and fired a third shot down the road by the trees. The evidence of those who were standing with the deceased and the wounded man shows that the second shot killed a man, the third shot wounded another man.

8. Mr Fowler and Mr Borgen got hold of these witnesses and on the 9th and 12th May recorded statements which the witnesses, now that we see what those statements were, declare not to be what they said.

9. The Salt officials as I before said started a theory that only one bullet was used and that killed one man and wounded the other at same time. Here we find if not the foundation, at least the structure built on that theory for they make both these witnesses say that the second shot as well as the first was fired across the road and into the air! The witnesses deny positively that they ever said anything of the kind and I believe them for:-

10. The first statement purports to have been taken by Mr Fowler in his own handwriting on 9-5-91 and witnessed strangely enough by Mr Borgen on 8-5-91 the day before it was taken!

11. On Sunday 10th May I, the Depy Comr of Police & other Police Officers went to the Salt Depot as mentioned by Borgen in his report (VIIa)/12th-5-91. The two witnesses were there and independently and in Mr Borgen's presence described exactly what they saw and where they and the salt peons stood, and distinctly stated and illustrated how each shot was fired, the first across the road, the second and third down the road and we took measurements of all the distances Mr Borgen himself assisting us and yet he never said a word as to one of the witnesses having the previous day said to Mr Fowler that the second shot was fired across the road, if he did say so which the witness denies (we had heard of these witnesses six days before Mr Fowler saw them). Then Mr Fowler appears to have taken the statement of the second of these witnesses on 12.5.91, or two days after they had given their exemplification on the spot, and again it is said that

the second Shot was fired across the road but there seems to be no allusion to the discrepancy between this Statement and that made on 10.5.91 in Mr. Borgen's presence. Then there is an absurd Statement that one of these witnesses moved the deceased from under the trees at the side of the road where he was in Safety and deposited him in the Centre of the road, whereas the reverse, as was natural, was what occurred. Either Mr. Borgen acting as Interpreter has wilfully misled Mr. Fowler or they both in concert have made this Statement with an ultimate object of vitiating this Evidence which is very direct.

12. The point is a vital one as whoever fired the second shot is immediately responsible for the death which resulted. One of their peons said at the Inquest it was Darmaji who fired the second shot. (He was the Short man in uniform) These witnesses would show that it was the tall man, Appadorey, who fired both second and third Shots. I suspect the contradictions in the salt peons statements are intentionally introduced

to throw sufficient doubt on the whole to ensure an acquittal.

13. It is strange that Mr. Borgen should have said nothing to me that Evening if the Statements were not in accordance with what they had recorded the previous day. ~~[illegible]~~ they kept silence as to the fact that any Statements had been taken from these witnesses, and if they had received orders not to interfere and let the police do what they liked or could why Examine them at all? Fortunately we had previously taken their Statements which agree with what they now again state and which they declare was what they said to the Salt Officers. Vide Mr. Borgen's remark at end of III^{a} Col: "Weldon seems to be rather troubled" over the whole business as it breaks down" the Statements of their (?) witnesses at" the Inquest". There is only one witness it does not agree with and that is one of their peons and if it is true and not got up by the Salt Dep^{t} to introduce a Contradiction it is very good and Satisfactory Evidence indeed.

14. Yesterday I heard of the arrival here on leave of the Jemadar from whom the present Jemadar Cooppoosamy

took charge six months ago. Knowing this man could give evidence as to the actual number of bullets in use with the Madras men I sent for him. He was quite willing to give Evidence but said there was an order in his department forbidding any Salt Officer to give information to the Police Except with Sanction of his departmental Superiors. I directed that he should be informed of the orders given by the Salt Commissioner although I could not understand or agree that any such order if it existed could apply to Evidence required by any Court. As Mr Sneyd the (Salt) Depy Comr. told me he would have the orders explained by him verbally written out and posted at the Madras depôt calling on any who could to come forward & give Evidence, I sent to get a copy of that order. Found that no such order had as promised been posted. Privately I hear Mr Grole disapproved. Just to satisfy the man I wrote a very urgent letter to Mr Sneyd explaining

Was this?

that a man who was not present when he communicated Mr Groles orders at the depôt was willing to give Evidence but under some departmental order required Sanction and asked that he would give me a written authority to meet any such cases. I marked the letter very urgent and told my messenger to wait for an answer. The letter was delivered to Mr ~~Grole~~ Sneyd at his Office. He at once took it to Mr Grole and after consulting him sent "Salaam". My messenger said he was instructed to bring an answer. Still he was told to go and answer would follow. I waited with the witness all day but got no reply till after office hours when Mr Sneyd writes to ask for name and No of the Salt Officer. I have no doubt the delay was owing to their trying to find that out themselves. As the matter was urgent as all the statements were yesterday put in the hands of the Govt. Solr. and this only was wanting I issued a summons had the man up explained that no such departmental order could apply to a judicial witness and even if it did I personally heard the Salt Commissioner give his Deputy orders that any man who could give information should do so and any way I meant to Examine him and did so. He gave very good Evidence and proved he handed over 41 bullets one having been lost.* I told him I would take all the responsibility but he was bound to answer truly. I daresay I will hear further of this and so I fear will the unfortunate Salt Jemadar but I have no doubt Govt. will protect him – and he will need it. I attach copy of my D.O. Correspondence with Mr. Sneyd –

15. When the Govt. Solicitor and Crown Prosecutor have Considered the evidence we will I hope put up the Case on Monday 29th..

16. Jemadar Cooposamy was yesterday Convicted of Wrongful Confinement and Crimł. Force and sentenced to Two Months Rig. Impt which he richly deserves as he is morally responsible for the death of that unfortunate man.

Yours Sincerely

J Weldon

Honble. Mr. J. F. Price C

Chief Secy.

* There were originally 42 bullets.

D.O.

City Police Office
Madras 23-6-91.

My dear Sneyd,

A man in your department, who was not present when you Communicated the Commissioner's Orders to the men at the Salt Cotaurs, Can give material evidence but he says there is a departmental order forbidding information being given without permission of the Superior Officers. He is quite willing to state what he knows if he gets your written permission to do so.

I find that the notice you said should be posted was not so published. Will you kindly send me an authority for any Salt Officer who Can speak to the Case to do so.

I do not Care to Compel a willing man.

Yours Sincerely
sd/ J Weldon.

J. F. P. Sneyd Esqr.
Dy Commr. Salt + Comr.

T

D.O.

Office of the Deputy Commissioner
of Salt and Abkari Revenue
Central Division.
Madras June 23rd 1891.

My dear Weldon,

Your D.O. of this day's date. Will you kindly let me have the name and Number of the Peon of this Department now you refer to in your letter.

Yours Sincerely
Sd/ J. F. P. Sneyd.

D.O.

City Police Office
Madras 24-6-91.

My dear Sneyd.

Your D.O. 23rd this day received

I confess your reply to my urgent D.O. dated yesterday somewhat surprises me as from it I gather that, notwithstanding Mr Crole's explicit instructions, you are not prepared to give general sanction or encouragement to anyone in your District willing to come forward and speak in the interests of justice. You undertook to have a Notice posted at the Salt Cotaurs embodying the Orders given by you personally in accordance with Mr Crole's direction; had this been done I would have simply referred the witness thereto and I never doubted that any hesitation on the part of any Salt Officer owing to misapprehension of the Commissioner's - and what I believed to be your - intention would be at once removed by you. The matter was emergent and therefore I have summoned the witness and examined him having informed him of the Orders already given by the Head of his Department.

The witness was Jemadar Lutchmiah now on leave who was passing through

Madras, and I trust he will not get into any trouble for having, as he was bound to do, attended and answered such questions as were put to him.

Yours Sincerely

sd/ J Weldon.

C. 250 16/91

CONFIDENTIAL No. 2/

[9] Judicial DEPARTMENT.

D.O.

From

Commr. of Police