[L. & M. 5,000—5-4-10.]

Plague Commissioners Proceedings

~~Local & Muni.~~ (189) ~~Department.~~

MISCELLANEOUS.

G.O., No. 1169A

DATED 29-4-98

[Despatch Abstract.]

Disinfection of abandoned houses

H.M's orders on Plague Comm^rs

Note regarding the ——— in disinfected

areas.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Local & Munl. (1899) Department.

CURRENT No.

Office.

Please put up all the papers on this subject, viz.

Order

Chairman Mr. Batten's D°. Dist. Mun. Commr. Calcutta for information 23/4 B

Ref Cir. 357 3/89 D/o No 1165 A 25-4-99

Recorded 29/4 B

From. Sub-up 25/4 The Plague Commissioner

No. 726

Dated 16. March '99
Received 17.
Registered 17.
Enclosures
Spare copies

Diary are in favour of circulation. 29/4

SUBJECT.

Enclg his diary for the 8th instant showing the work done during his tour in Panipat, Punjaj, Wallaja and Arcot.

BACK PAPERS

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

I

25 MAR 1899

Notice

Under the Plague Regulations Plague officers have full power to enter into and disinfect every house in areas infected with plague, — whether a case of plague has occurred in the house or not. But in order that all persons residing in infected areas, may receive timely notice of such disinfection, it is hereby notified that within the limits of the Municipalities of Vellore and Wallajah and of the Unions of Kuppam, Arcot and Ranipet no house in which a case of plague has not actually occurred will be disinfected by the Plague authorities until after the 25th March 1899.

2. On and after the 26th March 1899, every house in the above ~~case~~ infected areas will

will be liable to be disinfected by the Plague authorities, but in the case of a house where no plague case has actually occurred such disinfection shall not be commenced unless 24 hours' notice has been given by a notice signed by the Plague officer being affixed to the door of the house. After the expiry of the 24 hours the house will be disinfected by the Plague authorities. If the owner or occupier of the house is absent the door of the house will be broken open. Every care will be taken to avoid unnecessary damage to the house and its contents, but no claims to compensation will be attended to unless made by the owner or occupier on the spot while the disinfection is in progress, nor if the owner or occupier is absent will the Plague authorities hold themselves liable for any loss which might have been prevented if the owner or occupier had been present.

All householders are therefore recommended in their own interests to be present during the disinfection of their houses. After the disinfection of a house is complete, and the owner or occupier is absent the house door will be locked, if it was locked before the disinfection commenced.

B.

North Arcot Collector's office
Chittoor dated 15th March 1899 } Ag. Collector

2
641 P of 99

CO
KJ
IR.

Notice

Under the Plague Regulations Plague officers have full power to enter into and disinfect every house in areas infected with plague, whether a case of plague has occurred in the house or not. But in order that all persons residing in infected areas, may receive timely notice of such disinfection, it is hereby notified that within the limits of the municipalities of Vellore and Wallajah and of the Unions of Kuttam, Arcot, and Rampet no house in which a case of plague has not actually occurred will be disinfected by the plague authorities until after the 25th March 1899

2. On and after the 26th March 1899 every house in ~~any~~ the above infected areas will be liable to be disinfected by the plague authorities, but in the case of a house where no plague case has actually occurred such disinfection shall not be commenced, unless 24 hours notice has

has been given by a notice signed by the plague officer being affixed to the door of the house. After the expiry of the 24 hours, the house will be disinfected by the plague authorities, provided either that either (a) the owner or occupier or some one acting in his interests is present, or (b) the plague officer is satisfied that the owner or occupier is present in the town or is aware of the notice and is purposely refraining from appearing. In case (b) the disinfection shall not commence without the orders of the plague officer himself. Every care will be taken to avoid unnecessary damage to the house and its contents, but no claims to compensation will be attended to unless made by the owner or occupier on the spot while the disinfection is in progress nor if the owner or occupier absents himself during the progress of the disinfection, will the plague authorities hold themselves liable for any loss which might have been prevented if the owner or occupier had been present.

3. If the owner or occupier is absent when the notice is affixed to the house, and neither the owner or occupier nor any one on his behalf appears at the time fixed for the commencement of the disinfection, and the plague officer is satisfied that the owner or occupier is not wilfully evading to appear and is not aware of the notice, the house will instead of being disinfected forthwith, be locked (if it is not already locked) and sealed, and re-occupation will be prohibited until the house has been disinfected by the plague authorities. The occupier of such a house should if he wishes to re-occupy the house apply to the plague officer to have it disinfected.

North Street Collis office. Chittoor dated 15th March 99

J.
Ag. Collector.

Prof. 226
16-3-99

Enclosures 1 draft Affidavit
2 Notices

H. M.

As to the legality I agree with you the P. G.

The question of policy is for H. M.

I should have thought that without notice, a house or two might have been broken open & disinfected, as an experiment, with chief men and relations present, due precautions against theft, and with responsible officials present

Sd H. J. 27. 3. 99.

I cannot see the necessity for disinfecting closed houses in which no case of plague has occurred & which are therefore presumably not infected and I would not therefore have such houses broken open for the purpose.

Sd A. J. B. 28. 3. 99.

To P. G. for perusal. 2.0.

Sd H. J. 29. 3. 99.

(For H. C's reply see separate papers attached.)

Reference 3578 99

NOTE FOR THE orders of H. M.
Secretary & Under Secy

Subject

Disinfection of abandoned houses in an infected area.

When I was at Arcot the other day Captain Pearse told me there were certain parts of the town which he believed to be highly infected, & which he would like to carry out a general disinfection, such a general disinfection to cover not only houses in which cases of plague have appeared, but all the houses in the area fixed upon. But difficulty arose, as in several of the areas he spoke of, the occupiers have gone away & left their houses locked, and he asked whether he could break open the houses for the purpose of disinfection. If the houses are to be disinfected at all, I am afraid two days of thorough disinfection are essential to any proper

(a) disinfect at once. or
(b) forbid re-occupation until disinfection is carried out.
The 2nd course is objectionable, as the late occupiers will re-appear at odd times, & possibly after long intervals; & to adopt it will mean keeping a disinfecting staff on the spot till the people chose to reappear — an indefinite period.

I consider immediate disinfection is legal under Or: Sanit: Reg 6. (see "Memorandum")

"When a building or place has, in the opinion
"of an officer appointed in that behalf, been
"so infected with the Plague as to render it
"further occupation a source of danger to
"the inmates thereof, the Director, or an officer
"specially or specially authorized by him in
"writing in this behalf may Summarily cause
"such building or place to be vacated &
"thoroughly cleansed & disinfected. &c &c"

We have proceeded under this section (or possibly this section & Sanit: Reg: 20) in Mantapore & Bellary, without opposition or objection of any kind. We have, however usually had to deal with agricultural villages, in which the people retain it no

~~NOTE FOR THE~~

great hardship to go & camp in their own fields —

The case of the houses under discussion is different, for they are already vacant & all we want to do is to disinfect them. I suggest to Captain Pearse & also to the Director that although in my opinion we had the power to enter & disinfect, it would be more considerate if a notice were published in the District Gazette that after a certain date a general disinfection of areas believed to be badly infected would be commenced & that 24 hours notice (Gratuitous notice to the house) would be given before disinfecting a house believed to be infected, although no case had occurred in it. * Such a course will give owners or occupiers a chance of returning & looking after their property. In Bellary the at first assented to by temporal

* I suggested that it should also be stated that Govt would take the greatest possible care of valuable property found in the houses, but could accept no responsibility for loss or damage; in the absence of the occupiers.

& disinfection of a vacated house
in which no case of plague has
occurred will lead to a riot; &
he therefore asks me to obtain for him
orders of Government — He refers
to the question of the legality of disinfection
"(without evacuation) of non-infected
"houses in all infected areas - Reg. 20
"(p. 36 of the 'Red Book') authorises
"the disinfection of villages, but I can
"find nothing authorizing the forcible
"disinfection of non-infected houses in
"Municipalities." He has overlooked
Orig. Reg. 6 to which I have referred
above - It is true Orig. Reg. 23
says "The Collector is empowered
"to direct the immediate evacuation
"of houses in the neighbourhood of an
"infected house, or of a block of
"houses or a particular locality, &
"to prohibit re occupation of such
"houses or locality without per-
"mission - - - " but I
do not consider that this can
limit the wide powers conferred
by Orig Reg 6 -
If it is considered that the

[Where quote his letter]
20/3 1d

note. It shd be Addl Reg 20.

Ⓐ By non-infected I understand him
to mean houses in which no cases
of plague have occurred.

a an alternative —

~~NOTE FOR THE~~

the sooner the Regs can be amended
the better -

The Collector encloses two notices I & II
I is as I proposed, & to which
he takes exception on the ground
that he fears a breach of the peace.
II is a modification, in which he
proposes to disinfect such houses
only if the occupier or his representative is present, or if the Plague
Officer is satisfied that the occupier is
purposely keeping out of the way, &,
thereafter, to prohibit re-entry until
disinfection has been carried out.
The adoption of the latter proposal
will mean that all absent occupiers
(if they be permitted the supervision)
will continue to absent themselves until
it pleases them to return, & we shall
have to continue to keep a disinfecting
staff in attendance —

Personally I don't see where the
danger of a riot comes in. No
person to be affected by the house
being broken into in his absence is
the absentee: he will be able to
make a row, & I don't see why

the people stared.

Mr Batten makes a suggestion which is worthy of consideration, & that is that family publication in the District Gazette will not attract the attention of all readers, & that the notice should be published also in the Post Limit Gazette & all District Gazettes. This will take a very long time, & the delay is to be avoided. Very few read any Gazette. If the notice is published in the District Gazette, & tom-tomed in all villages of the District, & such notice should be sufficient.

May the matter before Govt. as the Mester asks me to do so

Dy/3 [illegible]

Desp 24/3 99
H

No doubt disinfection is advisable in all cases of deserted houses in Blocks where plague has been severe, but in these cases unless general evacuation is carried out, even if all deserted houses are disinfected, the danger from the inhabited houses remains. I should think where general evacuation is not possible, disinfection of empty houses should not be insisted upon, if likely to cause a disturbance - but Mr. Batten appears to exaggerate the danger - I doubt whether people much care whether their neighbours suffer in the way -

Yrs M. H.
11. iv. 99.

H.E.'s reply to H. M.'s Note of 28. 3. 99

I am sorry that in putting up the note I did not discuss the question of the houses being infected. H. M. has decided the question I raised by holding that the houses are presumably not infected. The matter has been discussed in papers which were returned from camp yesterday. I am afraid that experience teaches us that where plague has once become established, the presumption as to the infectedness or uninfectedness of a house is that it is infected. I take Hindupur as the strongest example where the greater part of the town was evacuated willingly; the rest was eventually evacuated by persuasion & proclamation. But the disease did not stop. It was found that people were constantly returning to their houses, and those who went even to houses in which no case had occurred (and which had not been disinfected?) nevertheless contracted the disease. As soon as the going to and fro was prohibited the disease came to an end. I think a legitimate inference

is that infection was caught in houses in which cases of plague had previously occurred. How they became infected is unknown. - possibly by rats, or possibly in the way Captain Pearce suggested the other day, that, when a house is attacked, valuable goods are removed to a neighbour's house before the attack becomes known to the authorities, for fear that they may be damaged by disinfection. In all places but Vellore, Arcot, Walaja & Ranipet, we have carried out a general disinfection of the whole town or village after a general evacuation. My own opinion is that this is the only sure way of controlling the disease; & I do not think we should be justified in calling for a general evacuation unless we are prepared to carry out a general disinfection. The four towns I mention above are on a different footing, for we have not tried to have them evacuated. But I nevertheless consider that a general disinfection of dry-ised blocks streets or lanes, which are shown to be highly infected by the remember

of deaths occurring in them is advisable. I think that in a town which cannot be evacuated the disease when once established can only run its course. What that course may be depends mainly on the congeniality of the climate, soil & general surroundings to the bacillus, but it may be modified to a certain extent by the conduct of the people & the measures taken to combat the disease. I consider it would be accepting a great risk, if it was laid down that no house is to be disinfected but those which are known to be infected.

Jd L. B. 3.4.99.

Very well. I will accept the results of the P.C's and his officers' experience and leave it to him to carry out his proposal. Notice should of course be given before closed houses are broken open. I agree with the Secy. that people are not likely to make a grievance of the breaking open of the houses of their absentee neighbours.

(Jd) A.B. 12.4.99

To P.C. for perusal
& O.
Jd M H.
17.IV.99.

en given for copying ____
en copied ____
en examined ____
en signed ____
} 189 .

AGAIN G.O., No. 189 . , DATED

ENT No.

OSURES TO C. No.

ES OF GOVERNMENT	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
TER OF GOVERNMENT.								
STATEMENT WITH DITTO.								
PAPE NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH IN ORIGINAL.								

N.B.—
A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied
P = Copy abstract only.
Q = Copy heading only.