

L & M
Revenue (1897) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

G.O., No. 659 P

DATED 4/5/97

[Despatch Abstract.]

Disinfection

Recording letter from the Plague Commr. submitting
his remarks on the subject of — of abandoned
houses in an infected place.

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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. (1897) Department.

CURRENT No. 641P

Note for the Secy.

This paper which was sent to P.C. H.O. on 17.4.99 has returned today. This may perhaps be simply recorded.

From

The Plague Commr

Order No 6597 dtd 27.4.99

*Received
NW
4.5.99*

Refou C. No. 3573

Dated 24. }
Received 27. } March '99
Registered 27. }

Enclosures 3

Spare copies

SUBJECT.

Sub 9 to Govt his remarks on the subject of disinfection of abandoned houses in an infected place; and forwarding two draft notices submitted by the Colls of North West, empowering the Plague Officers to enter into for disinfection purposes any house whether infected with plague or not.

houses broken open for the purpose M 28.3.99 to 1.4.99 M 28.3.99

BACK PAPERS

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Notes for the orders of H.M.
through the Secretary to Govern-
ment L and M Department.

Subject

Disinfection of abandoned
houses in an infected area.

""
""

Enclosures { 1. Report of the
2 notices 29



As to the legality, I
agree with the P.C.

The question of policy
is for H.M.

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

H.T.
27 3 99

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

When I was at Arcot the other day,
Captain Pearse told me there were cer-
tain parts of the town which he believed
to be highly infected, and in which he
would like to carry out a general disin-
fection 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 and left their houses
locked; and he wished to know if he
could break open the houses for the pur-
pose of disinfection. If such houses
are to be disinfected at all, there
are only two ways of doing it.

- (a) disinfect at once or
- (b) prohibit re-occupation until dis-
infection is carried out.

The 2nd course is objectionable, as the
late occupiers will re-appear at odd
times, and possibly after long intervals
and to adopt it will mean keeping a dis-
infection staff on the spot till the
people choose to re-appear -- an indefi-
nite period.

I consider immediate disinfection
to P.C. for formal use
H.T. 27 3 99

No doubt disinfection is advisable in all cases of deserted houses in which 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 think where general evacuation is not possible, disinfection of empty houses is not so much insisted upon, if likely to cause a disturbance - but Mr. Batten appears to exaggerate the danger - I don't think people much care whether their neighbours suffer in the way

Mr. B. is 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 by holding that the houses are presumably not infected. The matter has been discussed in papers which have returned from Camp yesterday. I am afraid that experience teaches us that where plague has once become established, the presumption is to the infection or uninfectedness of a house is that it is infected. I take this as the strongest example. Here the greater part of the town was evacuated willingly; the rest was eventually

is legal under Original Mysal Regulation 6 (page 11 of Manual)

"When a building or place has, in the opinion of an officer appointed in this behalf, been so infected with the plague as to render its further occupation a source of danger to the inmates thereof, the Collector, or an officer generally or specially authorised by him in writing in this behalf, may summarily ^{cause} such building or place to be vacated and thoroughly cleansed and disinfected &c. &c."

We have proceeded under this section (or possibly this section and Additional Regulation 20) in Anantapur and Bellary, without opposition or objection of any kind. We have, however, usually had to deal with agricultural villages in which the people esteem it no great hardship to go and camp in their own fields -

The case of the houses under discussion is different, for they are already vacant and all we want to do is to disinfect them. I suggested to Captain Pearce and also to the Collector that although in my opinion we had the power to enter at once and to 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, and that after that date, 24 hours' notice (by affixing a notice to the house) would be given

elimination. But the disease
did not stop. It was found that
people were constantly returning to
their homes, & that those who
went to even to houses in which
(I do not know how disinfected)
no cases had occurred, never

theless contracted the disease.

As soon as the thing began to
propagate the disease came to an
end. I think the legitimate inference
is that infection was caught in
houses in which no cases of plague
previous had occurred. How they became
infected is unknown. - Possibly
rats, or possibly in the way Capt. Pearson
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.

before disinfecting a house believed to
be infected, although no case had occurred
in it. I suggested that it should also
be stated that Government 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 occupier.
Such a course will give owners or occu-
piers a chance of returning and looking
after their property. Mr. Batten, who at
first assented to my proposal, now objects
in a letter which is put up, in which
he thinks that the breaking open and
disinfection of a vacated house in
which no case of plague has occurred

will lead to a riot; and he, therefore,
asks me to obtain the orders of Govern-
ment. He raises the question of the

(I here quote his letter)

legality of the disinfection (without
evacuation) of non-infected houses in
all infected areas. Regulation 20 (page
35 of the Reg Book) authorises the
disinfection of villages, but I can find
nothing authorising the forcible disin-

It should be article 20.

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

fection of non-infected houses in
municipalities". He has overlooked
Original Regulation to which I have re-
ferred above. It is true, Original Regu-
lation 23 says "The Collector is em-
powered to direct the evacuation of
houses in the neighbourhood of an infected
house or of a block of houses or a
particular locality and to prohibit re-
occupation of such houses or locality
without permission -----" but I do

In all places like Belur, Anant,
Wazir & Ranipet, we have
carried out a general disinfection,
of the whole town or village, after
a general examination. My own
opinion is that this is the only way
of controlling the disease; & I
do not think we should be justified
in sitting for a general examination
unless we are prepared to carry
out a general disinfection. The
four towns I mentioned above are on
a different footing, for we have
not tried to have them examined.
But I nevertheless consider that
a general disinfection of defined
blocks, streets or lanes, which are
known to be highly infected & the
number of deaths occurring in
them is advisable. I think that
a town which cannot be examined

not consider that this can limit the
wider powers conferred by Original Reg-
ulation 6.

If it is considered that the
Regulations do not authorise a general
disinfection in municipalities the
sooner the Regulations are amended the
better.

The Collector encloses two notices
I and II. I is, as I proposed, and to
this he takes exception on the ground
that he fears a breach of the peace.
II is a modification, in which he pro-
poses to disinfect such houses only if
the occupier or his representative is
present, or if the Plague Officer is satis-
fied that the occupier is purposely
keeping out of the way, and as an alter-
native to prohibit re-entry until disin-
fection has been carried out. the adop-
tion of the latter proposal will mean
that all absent occupiers (if I may be
permitted the expression) will continue
to absent themselves until it pleases
them to return, and we shall have to
continue to keep a disinfection staff
interminably ---

Personally I don't see where the
danger of a riot comes in. The person
to be aggrieved by house being broken
into in his absence is the absentee.
He ^{won't} be able to make a row, and
I don't see why other people should.

Mr. Batten makes a suggestion which
is worthy of consideration, and that
is, that possibly publication in the
District Gazette will not attract the

the disease has been established
 in only one of its courses. What that
 course may be depends mainly on
 the congeniality of the climate,
 soil, & general surroundings to the
 hillmen, but it may be modified
 to a ^{certain} extent by the conduct
 of the people & 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 disinfectant but those
 which are known to be infected.

3/3. 11

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. H.A. 12.4.99.

To play Comm. for formal
 H.O.
 17.4.99

Submitted for orders

attention of all absentees, and that
 this notification should be published
 also in the Fort Saint George Gazette and
 all District Gazettes. This would take
 a very long time, and delay is to be
 avoided. Very few read any Gazette.
 If the notification is published in the
 District Gazette and tom-tomed in all
 villages of the district, such notice
 should be sufficient.

I lay the matter before Government
 as the Collector asks me to do so.

W. M. S. M. S. M. S.
 24/3/99
 For Plague Commission

PLAGUE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

(189)

CURRENT No. 589 P

L.M. Nos 589 P & 641 P

From

The Plague Commissioner

Order

Sirn. The papers are returned
with thanks.

No. 726

L.M.
1/5/89

1/5

Dated 16. 3. 99

Received

Registered

Enclosures

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To

Secy to Govt L.M. 4.0

SUBJECT.

Submitting his diary for
the 8th March 1899 showing
the work done during his
tour to Ranjet, Punjab
Wahajia & Arcot.

BACK PAPERS.

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189 .

READ AGAIN G.O., No.
 189

DATED

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURES TO O. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DIET.

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