

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Marine

DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 198

Press
~~Mis.~~

Dated 12. 5. 1857.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Circular.

It having been reported that the Madras Light went out on Sunday morning, and was not lighted again in less than an hour the Master Attendant will feel obliged if the Commanding Officers of Ships observed such a deviation to favor him with their individual remarks. And he will at all times be glad if any neglect or irregularity in the display of the light is observable, that such an occurrence may as early as possible be brought to his notice.

Master Attendant's Office of
Madras 1st April 1857.

(Signed) Chris. Biden
Master Attendant

To, The Commanding Officer of the Ship Maggie Miller

Did not observe it personally but it was reported to me by the 13th Officer on duty afterwards.

(Signed) J. P. John

Ship Shannon. Did not observe it.

" Isabella Blyth. Did not observe it.

" Clarendon. Did not observe it going out.

Barque Emerald. Did not observe it.

" Fanny. Did not observe it.

(Signed) J. P. John
Chief Officer

" John Henry. Did not observe it.

" Indian Chief. Did not observe it.

" Antumnus. (Signed) W. T. Archer.

" Calcutta. Did not observe it.

(Signed) W. C. Leach.

Am: Ship South Shore. Did not observe it.

The Ship Henriette { J'ai vu monter sur la dunette par
un observateur quelques observations au
Phare. Je n'ai vu aucune conséquence : je suis descendu immédiatement.
Signé Boismoreau

Etant à la mer je ne puis rien dire de cela. J'ai observé le feu ce matin à 4 heures et je n'ai vu aucune conséquence de cela.

True Copy

(Signed) Chris Biden
Master Attendant

(True Copy)

M. M. M.

Secretary of the Board

C. M.

N^o 149

Master Attendants Office
Madras 3^d April 1857.

From Captain C. Biden
Master Attendant,

To
J. J. Franklin Esq^r
Secretary to the Marine Board,
dated 3^d April 1857 N^o 149

Sir,
In continuation of my letter about the
Madras Light dated the 2^d instant, in which
I mentioned to the Marine Board my intention
to issue a Circular through the Fleet, I have
now the honor to acquaint you that I did so, and
herewith forward you copy of the same
subscribed to by the respective Commanders.

And as the Commander of the
ship "Maggie Miller" declares that his third
Officer did report the Light being at a certain
time extinguished, I wrote and requested him
to state the precise report made by his third
Officer, and I also addressed that Officer
on the same subject copies of their reply are
also forwarded and I have made further
enquiries on this very important question.

I am now afraid that the Light
has in some instances been so subdued or
nearly

2/12
On letter from the
Marine Board dated
28 April 1857 N^o 149

From
The Master Attendant
The Secy Marine Board

Forward Circular
sent through the Fleet.
Reference to the Marine
Board being out on Sunday
morning.

N^o 1857/10
In 10 186

nearly extinguished a short time before daylight, but the Superintendent and his Deputy declare that such has not been the case, and that the burners are never put out or quenched until broad daylight appears.

The report about the light, and the enquiry which has been instituted will, however, serve as a salutary warning to the Superintendent and all the keepers, and I will also have such a watch kept upon their attendance, as will I hope prevent the probability of any negligence on their part.

It is of the utmost importance to the shipping either resorting to this port, or passing within a certain distance that there should be no doubt or uncertainty about the display of a light that is a safeguard against a too near approach to the Pulicat shoal, and as a Beacon to lead ships in safety to the Roadsteads.

And I beg to assure the Board that I shall always consider it my duty to maintain the utmost watchfulness and care at the Light house, and if it can be proved that either the Superintendent or any one of the keepers under his charge neglect their duty, he or they shall not escape with impunity and I

^{up}
I have warned each of those persons that their conduct will hereafter be carefully watched and that they must strictly do their duty.

I have the honor to be
(Signed) Chris Biden
Master Attendant.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your note concerning the light I beg to say that my third Officer was keeping watch on Monday morning and at 20 minutes to 5 observed the light to go out, it was not lighted again while he was on duty.

April 3rd 1857

Yours truly
(Signed) F. P. Johns.

To
Captain C. Biden

Dear Sir,

In answer to your note just received I must inform you that I made a mistake by informing Captain Johns that I observed the Madras Light to be extinguished sooner than usual

usual on Sunday morning, as it was not my
watch in that morning, but I did remark
it being out sooner on Monday morning, I
can testify that it was out before 5 o'clock
A. M. on Monday morning, so hoping to
be excused for the blunder I made by
stating it to be on Sunday, it may be as well
to give you my reason for so doing. I thought
no more about it until last night when the
Circular came off and being asked if I
did observe it, it struck me that it was
out sooner than usual but I thought it
was asked was it Monday morning thus
the mistake, and

I am

Sir

Your humble servant

Signed J. Finlinson

3^d Officer Ship Maggie Miller,

To
Captain C. Biden

/ True copy /

/ Signed C. Biden

/ True copies /

~~Monahan~~

Secretary Marine Board

5R
Master Attendants Office
Madras 2nd April 1857.

From

Captain C. Biden

Master Attendant,

To

J. I. Franklin Esq^r

Secretary to the Marine Board.

Sir,

dated 2 April 1857. 1st

I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your letter of this day's date
informing me that it has been intimated
to the Right Honorable the Governor that
the Madras Light went out on Sunday
morning and was not relit for an hour.

2 Being present when you
received this communication yesterday, I
desired the attendance of the person under
whose charge the Light house Establishment
is placed when he declared that having
received a special message from me, late
on the evening of the 28th, he was particularly
cautious about the Light and was himself
in attendance at the Light house from
1 till past 4 A. M. on the 29th when the
Light

Light was very clear and brilliant.

3 And I may here observe that when leaving my office on the evening of the 28th and in full expectation that the P. & O. Steamer "Bengal" would arrive before daylight, I desired the Superintendent to have every attention paid to the efficiency of the Light; and about 7 A. M. on the 29th I received his written report that, under his personal inspection, the Light was very good from 1 to past 4 A. M.

4. The Steamer "Bengal" did arrive so early on the 29th that I feel convinced so cautious a Navigator as her Commander Captain Black, with whom I have been some years intimately acquainted would have reported so remarkable a Circumstance as the disappearance of the Madras Light, his silence on so important a subject and the precaution I had taken fully convince me that such an instance of neglect could not have occurred on the morning of the 29th ultimo.

5 It would indeed seem strange that one and all the lamps should have gone out at the same time and knowing as all the

6 the Commanders of ships in the Roadstead do of my constant anxiety about this and all other Maritime Lights, I am at a loss to imagine how so negligent an event as the burning out of the Madras Light could occur without its being brought to my notice.

6 I have addressed a Circular to the Commanding Officers of the ships in the Roadstead on this very question and have requested that any irregularity or apparent negligence in the display of the Lights may as early as possible be brought to my notice.

7 The invariable perfection of the Madras Light is a question of such importance that any slur cast upon it, or unfavorable report touching its efficiency should in my humble opinion, be strictly examined and I hope in this instance the Marine Board will call for such further information as can be obtained and I do sincerely hope that the report which has reached the Right Honourable the Governor will be found to be utterly void of foundation.

Master Attendants Office
Madras 2^d April 1857
A.D.

Shave & Co.
I signed Chris Bider
Master Attendant.
Matthew M
Secretary

To

The Secretary Marine Board
Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter No. 1439 of yesterday and to inform you that I have heard that the steamer "Bengal" was lost about 2 P.M. on the morning of the 29th ultimo in consequence of the madras light being obscured.

The "Bengal" cast anchor in the Roads after day light and I was on deck a short time (about 20 minutes) afterwards it was then very hazy and objects on land except close to the beach were very indistinctly seen. I had been fully quarter of an hour on deck before the signal guns on the arrival of our steamer, were fired.

It is only since receiving your letter that I have learnt that the light was not seen, and that on inquiry I find what I have stated as to the stoppages at about 2 P.M. when I got on deck I heard no observation whatever as to the light being obscured.

A letter from the ship
Marine Board dated
28th March 1857 at 11.50

From
The Master of the Bengal
at Madras
To the Secy Marine Board

After my explanation
in relation to the report of
the Bengal being lost
I have not heard any more
and nothing further
can be ascertained.

At 11.57 P
The Secy.

observed or not burning: the long time that elapsed before our arrival was noticed, by firing the guns, was remarked upon by many. I attributed it to the hazy morning preventing the authorities on shore making us out, on observing us entering the Roads.

I have &c

Madras.

9th April 1857

(Signed) Neill Col.

1st Lt. Fusiliers.

N H.

Madras 13th April 1857

Sir,

I beg to acknowledge your letter of the 11th Instant and to state that I was a passenger in the steamer "Bengal."

We were approaching Madras on the 29th ultimo, and finding that the engines were stopped I dropped anchor and went on deck at about half past 3 A. M. I could not however see the Light nor could one of the other passengers. Lieut. Round, who joined me. The vessel had no sail set, and the engines

engines continued stopped for upwards of an hour. The light then appeared so near and so bright that I should have felt surprise had not Captain Black said to a gentleman with whom he was talking that he had sighted the light at or before 3 A. M. and afterwards stopped the engines on its crossing to be visible. Such at least was what Lieut. Round and I understood Captain Black to say but the observation was not made to us, and it would therefore be more satisfactory to me if the Board saw fit to obtain information from Captain Black or his officers when the Bengal revisits Madras which may be in a short time.

On the Light becoming visible steam was put on at easy speed and the Bengal anchored in the roads a little before 6 A. M.

I have &c

(Signed) E. Mallby

S. S. Bengal

N^o 5

S. S. Bengal

Madras Roads

April 27th 1857.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter of the 11th instant having reference to the invisibility of the Madras light on the morning of the 29th March, and I have much pleasure in giving you what information I can with respect to it, at 2 A. M. inferring from my latitude by a star that I should be about the verges of the light and not seeing it from aloft, I stopped and soundst in 50 fathoms. Before I had time to go on again, we made the light satisfactorily from the topsail yard bearing about N. W. 1/4 W. I then steered for it till 3. 25. when it disappeared, at first I thought unaccountably till 4. 50 when I saw it again through what I now found to be a very thick haze. I thought for the first quarter of an hour of its disappearance that it might have been accidental, but just before it reappeared the fog blew off the land satisfying me as to the real cause, I anchored in the Roads just at

at day light and it was so foggy then ^{that} that I could not discern the flag-staff at Fort Saint George.

I am very glad of this opportunity of testifying to the excellence of the Madras light, which I consider to be undoubtedly the best in India and quite equal to almost any in the world.

Hoping this explanation will prove satisfactory to the Marine Board.

I remain &c.

(Signed) Tho^s. Black.

(True Copies)

Matthew Ma

Secretary Marine Board.

Marine Department

No. 166.

From the Secretary Marine Board.

Dated 28th April 1857.

For Orders

Captⁿ Black's letter appears
to account for the misapprehension
of the light.

Satisfactorily I think.

A.
By
W.
O.

1857

See letter from the
Marine Board
dated 28th April 1857
No 166 -

Correspondence
on the subject of the
Marine Board
to have present on the
morning of the 29th
at 10th -

No. 1857 D

No No 166 -

Received of the
Honble Secy to the Govt
of Madras
the sum of Rs 100
on 21st April 1857

For
the
Govt

By order of the
Honble Secy to the Govt
of Madras

By order of the
Honble Secy to the Govt
of Madras

No 24 From

N^o 1650

11th

J. I. Franklin Esq^{re}
Secretary Marine Board.

To
J. Pycroft Esq^{re}
Chief Secretary to Government
Fort Saint George.

Sir dated 28 April 1857 N^o 1650

1 I have the honor by
desire of the Marine Board to acknow-
ledge receipt of Extract Minutes of
Consultation of the 31st ultimo N^o 127, in-
timating that the Right Honorable the
Governor had been informed that the
Madras Light had been suffered to go
out on the morning of the 29th ultimo, and
had not been relit for an hour, and
inquiring if such was the fact.

2 The accompanying letter
from the Master & Steward shows
that it so happened that more than
ordinary vigilance was exercised on the
morning in question and the preceding
night. It was the belief of the
Board that the light was not
suffered to go out as represented, and
if

p1

if such had been the case they thought that the Commanders of the vessels in the Roads would have hastened to represent the fact to them in order that such negligence which might be instrumental to the loss of a ship, should be taken immediate notice of and checked.

3 I am further directed to forward a second communication from the Master Attendant with copy of a circular which was sent round to all the ships in the Roads showing the replies of the different Commanders and officers but as these did not afford information as satisfactory as could be wished, the Board desirous of fully proving or disproving the correctness of the rumour, addressed all who were likely to have any personal knowledge of the circumstances. For this purpose applications were made to Colonel Peel, Mr. F. Maltby, Captain Hutchinson and the Commander of the "Batal" on which vessel the first named gentlemen were passengers. Their

N^o 2

Their replies, with the exceptions of Captain Hutchinson who was not on deck, are appended, and although at first sight it would appear that the light was extinct the communication from Captain Black sufficiently explains the cause of its not being visible.

4 I am to add that on the enquiry which took place at this Board on the subject, the light keepers stated that the fog was very dense on the morning in question. I have the honor to be Sir,

Madr of
Marine Board Office
28th April 1857.
Ed^d M

Your most obedient servant,

Edmund

Secretary.

MS C31st March 15th 1816
14-4-09.

De Sirs: 7th 4th May
Maurice 1857 700 pounds

From
The Chief Deputy Agent
To
The Chief Deputy Agent
For the same purpose

Noted 28th
Received 29th April 1857

No 106
3 weeks

John W. C. Condon
on the subject of the
Maurice 1857 700 pounds
I have sent out on the
morning of the 29th
returning

34-35

MS C31st March 15th 1816
14-4-09.

With an add

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