

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Marine DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	328	Press ~~Miss.~~
Dated	22-7-1897	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

No. 21. Read the following letter from J. J. FRANKLIN, Esq., Superintendent of Marine; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 11th July 1859, No. 2725.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Proceedings of Government of the 2nd Instant, No. 296, communicating Mr. Forester's explanation of the reasons which induced him to withhold his receipt to the indent for coals supplied to the "Coromandel" in March last. These reasons are five, on each of which I beg to offer a few words.

1st. The bunkers of the Vessel were by order of Government carefully measured previous to her departure from England, and therefore the quantity of Coal on board can be ascertained to a few lbs. arise from the difference of stowage as well as from the description of the coal whether large or small.

This is a very loose way of calculating to a few tons when a large quantity is shipped: some Coal is of greater specific gravity than others, and moreover a great deal of difference in the quantity contained in the bunkers will arise from the description of the coal whether large or small.

2nd. Mr. Ward, the Chief Engineer (who has had 20 years practical experience in the Indian Navy) agreed with me in the belief that the quantity stated in the receipts had not been received on board.

Mr. Ward, the Chief Engineer, no doubt did and does believe that he had not the full quantity, but it is only his belief; while the coal was actually weighed on shore.

3rd. The quantity of coal expended during the trip (every pound of which is carefully weighed before being put on the fires) confirmed the previous opinion entertained by Mr. Ward and myself.

4. Without wishing for a moment to impute any improper motives to the Engineers on board the "Coromandel," I cannot but perceive how easily they may delude even themselves into a belief that the quantity said to be shipped has not been received.

It is the pride of an Engineer to keep up his steam with as little consumption of coal as possible—the less expended the greater will be his credit. It is not therefore assuming too much to suppose that in the weighing out the coal piece meal on board while the Ship is perhaps rolling or otherwise unsteady, the turn of the scale is made to favor the attending Engineer. On shore on the contrary the weighers are told that a liberal wastage will be allowed to induce them to give good weight.

4th. Coals are shipped with great irregularity; a boat said to contain a certain number of bags of a specified weight is often found to have a considerable deficit, and many bags are received short of weight as can be proved by the boat notes on the back of which are noted the contents of the boat with the initials of the receiving Officer.

Mr. Forester seems here to think that all bags weigh, or ought to weigh, the same. They do not: they are filled to what they will hold, and although they are nearly alike in weight, they are not set down as so, but are all put in the scale 5 or 6 at a time, and the weights recorded.

5th. Further, in event of my granting receipts for more coal than the Chief Engineer can account for, the Government of Bombay debit the amount deficient to the Commander of the Vessel.

To avoid this the Chief Engineer ought to be directed to make allowance in his expenditure for difficulty in correctly weighing the Coals as they are expended.

2. Mr. Forester further seems to think that I wished to lead to the supposition that this was the first instance in which a dispute about coals sent to the "Coromandel" had occurred. My remarks will not bear this interpretation, and if so, I should have conveyed a very erroneous impression. The fact is that there have always been disputes regarding coals to that Vessel, although to no other; and these disputes have not been confined to Madras, but have arisen at Bimlipatam and at Rangoon; and on this very account the Superintendent of the Irrawady Flotilla has asked to be supplied with 6,000 bags from Madras.

3. Under these circumstances I trust that Government will be pleased to direct that the indent be receipted for the full quantity which our books shew to have been weighed and shipped.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Marine Department,
from 16th to 22nd July 1859.*

4. With regard to some plan for avoiding the recurrence of such doubts in future, I have conferred with Lieutenant Fraser on the subject, and he is equally at a loss with myself to suggest any alteration in the present system. It is the same that is adopted every where: loss in the movement of Coal will occur on board as well as on shore, and it was his opinion at the first, expressed to Mr. Forester, that the indents ought to be receipted. He only suggests that when a deficiency of Coal is found on board, the Government should deal leniently with the Commander and not hold him responsible for it, unless of course it were shewn that he had been guilty of some malversation.

No. 22.

ORDER THEREON, 22nd July 1859, No. 328.

Under the circumstances represented in the above letter, a copy of which will be furnished to Mr. Forester, that Officer is directed to receipt the indent for the full quantity of coals, which are shown by the books of the Marine Department to have been weighed and shipped on board the "Coromandel" on the occasion in question.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

No. 328 - 22nd July 1859.

Under the circumstances represented in the above letter, a copy of which will be furnished to Mr. Forester, that officer is directed to receipt the indent for the full quantity of Coals, which are shown by the books of the Marine Department to have been weighed & shipped on board the Coromandel on the occasion in question.

The Superintendent of
Marine }
Mr. R. H. Forester - Str Coromandel } Dispt. 29th

1. The first of these is the
fact that the evidence
in the case is not
sufficient to establish
the guilt of the
defendant. The evidence
is not sufficient to
show that the
defendant is guilty
of the crime.

Wm. H. H. H.
Undersecretary of Marine