1. Number of pages. 10
2. Date of repair. 16.9.
3. Initials of Reference.

M.R.O. 1—99,000—16-10-29.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Cons. 1.12.57

G.O. No. 2212 Press / Mis.

Sa-E84/ Dated 1 — 12 — 19 57

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Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 1st December 1857.

No. 83. Read the following Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department, dated 19th November 1857, No. 4125.

Read the following letter from Colonel F. A. REID, Quarter Master General of the Army; to Colonel C. A. BROWNE, Secretary to Government, Military Department, dated 12th November 1857, No. 504.

SIR,

I am directed by the Commander in Chief to forward for submission to Government original letters (which be so good as to return eventually,) from Major General Coffin, Commanding Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, Mr. Superintending Surgeon Pearse, and Dr. Macfarlane, Surgeon of 3rd European Regiment, on the subject of the Barracks at present occupied by that Corps, and in which H. M's. Royal Regiment will be quartered on its arrival at Secunderabad.

Government is aware that, for years, the sanitary state of these Barracks has been the subject of a most voluminous correspondence out of which, indeed, has resulted the building of the new European Barracks at Trimulgherry. These latter are however now occupied by a wing of H. M's. 12th Lancers, and perhaps, under existing circumstances, it would not be politic to leave the Cantonment of Secunderabad without European Infantry, and Trimulgherry is four miles from it.

It is worthy of remark, that for these last 18 months the 3rd Regiment has been *healthy*— and, indeed Dr. Macfarlane remarks that the sanitary condition of the Regiment has been *better than most* since its arrival at Secunderabad 2 years and 7 months ago. Reviewing the whole case, His Excellency desires me to say that until the question shall be finally decided as to the amount of European Force we are to have at Secunderabad, he would recommend the following suggestions to be carried out.

1. The wall surrounding the Barracks to be pulled down.

2. The defective drainage rectified as much as possible *throughout.*

3. The Parcherry improved.

4. Buildings in too great proximity to the Hospital, to be pulled down, when it can be done without incurring any great outlay.

Under any circumstances, the Commander in Chief conceives these Barracks must be occupied for some years, and ought therefore to be improved.

Letter from Major General J. C. COFFIN, Commanding H. S. Force; to Colonel F. A. REID, Quarter Master General of the Army, Fort Saint George, dated Secunderabad, 29th October 1857, No. 339.

SIR,

It has appeared to me more than probable that the old European Barracks in the Cantonment of Secunderabad will continue to be occupied, and wishing to have the benefit of the experience of Surgeon Macfarlane, the able Medical Officer of the 3rd European Regiment, as well as of Superintending Surgeon Pearse, in regard to these Barracks, I directed letter, copy annexed, to be written to the latter Officer.

2. I have now the honor to submit to the Commander-in-Chief the replies of these Officers—It will be seen that as regards the Regiment now occupying these Barracks, there is nothing to object to on the score of health. I imagine that for the last 2 years the sickness has been less than in most European Regiments in India, and mortality unusually small, there can be therefore on the score of health no objection to their continued occupation.

3. But the Medical Officers agree in recommending that the wall surrounding the Barracks should be removed, and the Cook rooms, Privies, &c., placed at a further distance from the Barracks, this of course would greatly improve the circulation of air, but the details could only be determined on when it has to be practically carried out.

4. It will be observed that the removal of the Barrack Wall forms part of Lieutenant Winscom's Plan for fortifying these Barracks, and I would submit to His Excellency that it is very desirable that these Barracks should at once be made a fortified post, on the plan proposed above, as not only would they become an important post in season of difficulty, but in a sanitary point of view both Barracks and Hospital would be greatly improved thereby, the latter, as stated by Dr. Macfarlane, being surrounded on two sides by Native huts which at one part almost touch the wall of the enclosure.

5. It may not perhaps be out of place here to mention that I have been given to understand that the Resident has recommended to the Government of India that two European Infantry Regiments and one of Dragoons should in future be stationed at Secunderabad. In this case the arrangement I would propose for locating them is as follows :

One Regiment of Infantry to be lodged in the old European Barracks.

One Regiment of Infantry to be lodged in the 8 Ranges of Barracks at Trimulgherry, capable of lodging 1,120 men.

One Regiment of Dragoon—2 Squadrons or 4 Troops in the 2 separate ranges of Barracks

One Troop could be accommodated in the building in course of erection for a Canteen and one Squadron in that about to be erected for a Coffee room and Library, both which are situated close to the 2 separate Barracks. Temporary buildings in lieu of the above, also for extra accommodation as may be required, would have to be raised, but it is probable that for some time to come we shall not have more than two Squadrons of Dragoons stationed here.

6. I have thought it right to save further reference at once to make known to His Excellency the plan I have in view for the accommodation of any additional Troops, that may be sent here. I think it of great importance that in an extensive Cantonment like this, with a large Native population, there should be a body of European Infantry at hand to afford protection to our Guns, Military Stores, &c., and therefore in the present undefended state of the Cantonment, I would not wish to see the old Barracks denuded of Troops.

Letter from Captain T. PEYTON, Assistant Quarter Master General H. S. Force; to Superintending Surgeon George PEARSE, M. D., Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, Secunderabad, dated 2nd October 1857, No. 659.

SIR,

As there appears every probability of its being necessary that the old European Barracks at this station should continue to be occupied by a Regiment, I am directed by the Officer Commanding the Force to request that you will have the goodness to call upon Dr. Macfarlane, the Surgeon of the 3rd European Regiment, which Regiment has been in these Barracks for about 2½ years, for a report on the sanitary condition of the Regiment during the period it has been at this station, what effect he may consider the Barracks to have had upon the health of the men, and to request him to offer any suggestions that his professional and local experience may point out for the improvement of these buildings, including the Hospital and Parcherry.

The Major General will also be happy to be favored with your views on the above.

Letter from the Superintending Surgeon G. PEARSE, M. D., H. S. Force; to Captain T. PEYTON, Assistant Quarter Master General, Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, Secunderabad, dated 12th October 1857, No. 289.

SIR,

I have the honor to submit the report from the Surgeon of the 3rd European Regiment, called for by your letter No. 659, of the 2nd Instant, and to acquaint you, for the information

of the Major General Commanding the Force, that, to enable me to form a correct opinion on Dr. Macfarlane's suggestions, and also to state my own views on the subject of improving the sanitary condition of the European Barracks, I carefully inspected the whole of the buildings, with Dr. Macfarlane, on the 6th Instant.

The *two* great faults of the Barracks are stated by that Officer to be, their situation, and the manner in which the buildings are crowded together.

As regards the first of these points, I am fully aware of the fact, that frequent objections have been made to the site on which the Barracks are built, but as far as my judgment goes, I confess, I never have been able to persuade myself that these objections were well founded, nor, are they such as in my belief would "a priori" have occurred to any one selecting a site for a building of the kind. The low cultivated grounds to the S. and S. E. of the Barracks have been supposed to be a source of Malaria, the wind however in this part of India, rarely blows from that point; and the cultivated fields are moreover at a considerable distance from the buildings, and of no great extent.

The rocky range of Hills to the north east has also been a supposed source of Malaria, being said to have the effect of attracting the morning mist which arises during the north east monsoon, sweeping it towards the Barracks, but this, in like manner, I consider a very questionable source of disease.

The ground on which the Barracks are built, was, I believe, selected as being the highest and most open situation in the old Cantonment. The water being of excellent quality, and abundant in quantity, was also, I believe, a strong indicant to select that position.

There can, I think, be no doubt but the wall surrounding the Barracks on three sides, as pointed out in Dr. Macfarlane's report, is too close to the men's quarters, and that there is not sufficient open space around the squares. On the eastern wall are placed the Cooking and Bathing rooms, rendering the space still more confined than in the front or western face, and along the southern wall are a Prison, Library, Coffee rooms, &c. all illcontrived and unsuitable buildings, giving a crowded appearance to the place, and obstructing ventilation. I therefore fully concur in the desirableness, in a sanitary point of view, of these walls and buildings being all removed to a distance from the Main buildings.

Dr. Macfarlane has omitted, through an oversight, to notice the drainage, which I consider very objectionable. At present the drains run along the verandahs, and though said to be kept clean by being sluiced daily with water, should this precaution not be very carefully attended to, the consequences would be the production of unwholesome and prejudicial emanations. I would therefore recommend their being filled in, and new drains, quite clear of the building, opened.

As regards the remarks condemnatory of the present Parcherry, or married quarters, I entirely concur in the statement, that they are in every respect unsuited as dwelling houses for Europeans in a tropical climate, and the palid sickly aspect of many of the European women and children, affords sufficient proof that these poor people suffer in health from the confined, hot and ill-ventilated hovels in which they reside. The removal of the Parcherry would likewise be a great improvement to the Hospital, by opening the space around it, which should be cleared at an extent of not less than 60 or 80 yards from the outer wall.

I have some doubt regarding the eligibility of the site proposed by Dr. Macfarlane for a new Parcherry, viz. a piece of rising ground north east of the Barracks ; my objection is, that, should there be any truth in the supposed injurious effects, of the rocky hills alluded to in para. 4 of this letter, if the married quarters were placed still nearer to them, than the Barracks, the families might be expected to suffer more than the Soldiers have done. This however I only state hypothetically.

The Hospital accommodation is very complete, and has been found ample for the sick of a European Regiment, there is however no suitable apartment available for the Medical subordinates, especially for the one on duty, who is obliged to sleep in a small ill-suited apartment, the ante room of the Dispensary. The drainage requires some improvement, as pools of water lodge in the yard, close to some of the door-ways, after heavy rain. The necessary improvement in this respect, may be effected at a trifling expense.

Lastly, the removal of the Commissariat Store, which obstructs the free ventilation of the Grenadier and Light Company ranges, according to the direction of the wind, is desirable, for as stated, it is not only an obstruction, but is awkwardly placed as regards the northern end of the Barracks.

In offering these remarks on the suggested improvement, it should I think, be borne in mind, before incurring any heavy expense on account of these Barracks, that they have already been condemned, and that several Medical Officers of the Regiments which have heretofore occupied them, have attributed much of the sickness, and the heavy mortality which has occurred from time to time, within the last 30 years, to their situation, both with reference to the swampy ground to the S. and S. E. and to the rocky range of Hills already adverted to.

My own belief, however is, that periodical outbreaks of epidemic disease will always be liable to occur in the variable climate of the Deccan, similar to those which have been met with heretofore. Natives, in what may be called malarious seasons, are chiefly affected with fever of an intermittent type and Diarrhœa, whilst Europeans suffer, at the same time, and from like causes, from fever of a remittent type, and bowel complaints, assuming the more severe form of Dysentery (sometimes of a Typhoid character,) and such outbreaks will occasionally happen under any circumstances in which men may be placed, during malarious seasons.

My object in expressing this opinion, is, not that I wish it to be inferred, that much may not be done in improving, as well, the health, as the comfort of the European Troops, by providing them with habitations better suited to protect them from climatic influence, than were the old style of European Barracks in India, but to prepare the authorities to expect, that should a sickly season hereafter occur, and the European Soldiers in these Barracks suffer as on former occasions, the evil will at once be attributed to the (supposed ?) unhealthy situation of the Barracks, however much they may have been improved by such suggestions as are contained in these reports.

Letter from Surgeon D. MACFARLANE, M. D. 3rd Madras European Regiment; to Superintending Surgeon GEORGE PEARSE, M. D. Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, dated 9th October 1857, No. 45.

SIR,

I have the honor, in obedience to your request conveyed in your letter of the 3rd October, to inform you that since we arrived at this station on the 1st March 1855, (2 years and 7 months ago) the sanitary condition of the Regiment has been far better than most, and as good as any of the Regiments that previously occupied these Barracks. On our arrival here, we suffered a good deal from an epidemic attack of acute Dysentery, but we lost but few men, and since then, we have suffered under no form of disease arising from any fault in situation or construction in the old Barracks, for the last 18 months our daily average of sick has not been above 41½.

As it is probable that these Barracks will continue to be occupied by European Troops after our departure, I beg to lay before you the following suggestions for their improvement, so far as my judgment goes. The two great faults of these Barracks consist in their situation, and in the manner the buildings are crowded together. The first is irremediable. The second can be modified. I would first propose that the high dead wall surrounding the Barracks be taken away. This wall stops the circulation of air, throws back a glare into the interior of the Barrack enclosure, and is depressing in its look and appearance. In its stead an earth work with a deep ditch in front might be thrown up, enclosing sufficient space (to be taken in on the east, west and south of the Barracks) to allow of a large and cheerful looking enclosure to be formed almost right round the Barrack and which as is now the case on the south side, might be formed into a grass plot. For I look upon free space free and fresh air and some relief to the eye in such a shape as that I have alluded to, is of great consequence in keeping the mind contented and cheerful, and so conducive to health, both mentally, and physically, and therefore for the good of the service. The sloping banks of the earth work might also be turfed, I

would farther propose that this earth work would take in the main part of the ground extending down to the New Burying ground on the south, and to the Bungalow on the Oopal road on the east. The Coffee and Reading room, Staff Serjeant's quarters, Band practice room and Prison room, &c. &c. are all crowded down at the south side of the wall particularly at the right corner, most of them are mean shabby buildings. They might be removed farther down and scattered at sufficient distance from one another, in the space so formed to the southward. The Cook-rooms, Privies, Canteen, Wash houses, Plunge baths, &c. &c., are all with in a few paces, of the eastern oblong side of the large Barrack square, the effluvia from some of which must vitiate the air; by enclosing the flat piece of ground to the east of the Barracks, amply sufficient space would be afforded for all these buildings, nearly all of which ought to be well removed from where the men live, which would leave a broad clear space between them, and the Barrack square already a deep nullah runs through the centre of that piece of ground, and by covering that over it would form an excellent main drain to carry off what comes from the Cook-rooms &c. each Company has at present a miserable dirty small water room in a sort of closet at the end of the verandah of each Barrack. It would be a great improvement if 3 large spacious water rooms were built in lieu of them, one in front of the Grenadier and Light Company Barracks, to serve for the use of these two Companies, and one at each end of the large Barrack enclosure, to serve respectively for the use of the four Companies which inhabit the respective halves of the Barracks surrounding the square.

A new Prison room is much wanted, the present one is quite unfit, affording but little accommodation for Prisoners, and little or none for the guard over them, it is the worst building in the square. In the rain the guard is much exposed as the sole shelteri s in a part of the verandah.

The ration godown has been so placed that according as the wind blows, so either the Grenadier or the Light Company Barracks must suffer from want of circulation in the air. It abuts at a right angle on the centre of the outside of these two Barracks and is both unsightly and obstructive. It ought to be removed and placed elsewhere.

The Hospital itself is the best part of the Barracks, and is really an excellent building, commodious and airy, all it wants in the way of addition are quarters for the Medical subordinates. But a most urgent necessity exists for a complete clearance in its neighbourhood. The Parcherry Regimental Bazar, Native huts and nuisances of all sorts, surround it on two sides to such an extent, that in one part, there is scarcely room for two men to pass between the native houses and the walls. How such erections were ever suffered to occupy ground around the Hospital is, whatever has been, a marvel to me; I can testify to the annoyances the continual voice arising from the vicinity of a large native suburb has caused to many a poor sufferer, depriving him of sleep, and keeping him in a state of nervous irritation, when quiet and rest were indispensable to his recovery. To begin with the Parcherry, I say emphatically, a more miserable and utterly unfit set of mud huts for the accommodation of respectable European Soldiers and their wives I never in my life saw. The houses, if houses they can be called, are small, low, badly tiled with few or no sanitary or domestic conveniences, erected in a confined spot, and badly drained. In the hot weather, they are perfect ovens; in the rain they are puddles. There are of course, exceptions, but I speak of the mass—bitter and wavy have been the complaints made to me about them, by the women that have the misfortune to inhabit them. I would propose to remove the Parcherry over to the north east of the Barracks, on the other side of the Oopal road. There is there good space, on a good slope, where good drainage would be got, and pull down all native houses for 100 yards around the Hospital. The ground on which the Parcherry now stands, would form an excellent addition to the Parade ground, and the mud walls of the whole Parcherry would suffice to fill up an old Bowry, which for years has been a public nuisance, with its corrupting and stagnant water, and which is right in front of the Barrack gate—and down which it is a wonder to me, that many men the worse of liquor, have not fallen into long 'ere this. It is a double nuisance, being an open trap, to catch people in the dark, and its water being unfit for use, is stagnant and malarious.

I think that most of what I have proposed might be done at not a very great cost, and I feel certain, that if European Troops continue to be located there most of what I have mentioned will be attended with ultimate saving to the Government—and far more increased comfort to those that are stationed in these Barracks.

Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 1st December 1857.

The Governor in Council sanctions the proposed arrangements for the improvement of the old Infantry Barracks at Secunderabad to be carried out at once.

The suggestions by the Surgeon of the Regiment for converting the Nullah into a Main drain should meet attention, and his Lordship in Council is of opinion that the Bowry alluded to by that Officer should be filled up with the debris of whatever buildings &c., it may be intended to remove; immediate orders should be passed for these improvements being carried out.

(Signed) R. HAMILTON, Major,
Ag. Dy. Secretary to Government.

No. 84.

ORDER THEREON, No. 2212; dated 1st December 1857.

Ordered to be communicated to the Chief Engineer, who will be good enough to request the Chief Engineer of Hyderabad to have the improvements sanctioned in the above order, carried out at once; an estimate of the cost of the works should be prepared and forwarded without delay, for the sanction of Government.

(Signed) H. FORBES,
Acting Secretary to Government.

No. D.

No. 4125.

Extract from the Minutes of Consultation
19th November 1857.

Read the following Paper

From the Quarter Master
General . . . . .

Received 12th November
1857, No 504.)

The Governor in Council
sanctions the proposed arrangements
for the improvement of the old Infan-
try Barracks at Secunderabad to be
carried out at once.

The suggestions by the Surgeon
of the Regiment for converting the
Nullah into a Main drain should
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in Council is of opinion that the
Bowry

Bowery alluded to by that Officer should be filled up with the debris of whatever Buildings &c. it may be intended to remove, immediate orders should be passed for these improvements being carried out.

(Signed) R. Hamilton Major
Ag. Dy. Secy. to Govt.

To
The Quarter Master
General.
" Department Public
Works.

2d
Edward Smith

Public Works 1857 Dispatches
Comm 1st Dec.r No. 2311

Extract from the Minutes of
Con: in the Military Dept.t

Dated 19th
Recvd 20th } Nov.r 1857
From Major Genl. L.C. Coffin
Commanding H.M. Forces
15th Dec.r 1857 No. 3114 in Comm.n 11 Inst.t
Encl.d Rect.d 21st
105

Sanct.g the proposed arrangements for the improvement of the 2d Infantry Barracks at Secunderabad to be carried out at once.

No. 2212.

Ordered to be communicated to the Chief Engr. who will be good enough to request the Chief Engineer at Hyderabad to have the improvements sanctioned in the above order, carried out at once; An Estimate of the cost of the works should be prepared and forwarded without delay for the sanction of Government.

Fort St. George
1st Dec.r 1857

9 Copies to the Chief Engr. Disp.d 4.
Ret.d to the Mily. Sec.tt 4. Engr.s Encl. 19 Inst.t

No. 2311.

No. 2212.

No. 3834-84.

Note under order of No. 2212. 1st Dec.r