1. Number of pieces 10
2. Date of [illegible] 12/7/3
3. Initials of Reference
M.R.O. 1—22 600—51-11-60

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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

Cons. 19.5.57

G.O. No. 929 Press Mis.

16-17

Dated 14—5— 1857

Not to be folded or roughly handled

12/7/57

Fort Saint George, Public Works Consultation of 19th May 1857.

No. 16. Read the following letter from Colonel C. E. FABER, Chief Engineer ; to H. FORBES, Esq., Acting Secretary to Government, dated 17th April 1857, No. 11785.

SIR,

1. With a letter, No. 535, dated 18th October 1855, the District Engineer Godavery Division forwarded with other estimates, one of Rupees 7,950, corrected in the Central office to (8,650) eight thousand, six hundred and fifty, for building a Sea Custom House at Coconada in the Rajahmundry District. The plan of the Custom House was prepared agreeably to the orders of Government conveyed in Extract Minutes of Consultation, No. 459, dated 21th August 1855, but previous to the receipt of that order, a sum of Rupees 477, had been expended in the preparation of materials, on the sum of Rupees (5,498-12) five thousand four hundred and ninety-eight, and annas twelve, sanctioned* on the 10th July 1854.

* Extract Minutes Consultation No. 297.

2. In reply to the above letter, in Extract from Proceedings No. 3625, dated 15th December 1855, the District Engineer was requested to state, what use was intended to be made of the Master Attendant's Office at Coconada, should provision be made for that Officers accommodation in the new Custom House. Further information was also requested, as to the sum required for purchasing the ground on which the new Custom House was to be built.

3. With a letter No. 671, dated 21th December 1855, the District Engineer furnished the required information, together with copy of a letter No. 91 dated 8th October 1855, from the Collector of Rajahmundry to the Board of Revenue, on the same subject.

4. In Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 233, dated 6th March 1857, Government in passing orders on a letter No. 4 dated 13th February 1857, from the Collector of Rajahmundry, requested me to report without delay, the actual progress that had been made in building the Custom House up to that time, the manner in which the sum of Rupees 477, before referred to had been expended, and whether as it appeared from the Collector's letter, the erection of the building had been commenced before the ground on which it stood had become the property of Government. Mr. Purvis was also directed to proceed at once with whatever formalities were wanting to complete the purchase of the extent of river frontage, which the Government desired to obtain.

5. The foregoing order was communicated with Extract from Proceedings No. 10813, dated 11th March 1857, to the Collector of Rajahmundry, and District Engineer of the Godavery Division, with a request that the latter Officer would furnish the required information.

6. With a letter No. 149, dated 17th March 1857, the District Engineer furnished the information, and observed, that the revised Plan, and estimate for the new Custom House, were forwarded on the 22nd December 1855, but not having been entered in the Budget for 1856-57, he feared they must have been mislaid. He further stated, that the estimate was entered in his Budget for 1857-58, and expressed a fear, that from the information called for in Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 233, dated 6th March 1857, it must have been again mislaid.

7. On the receipt of this letter, the Records of the Central office were looked over, and it was found that the papers connected with the Custom House in question, had been taken to the Madras Mint by the Superintending Engineer Northern Circle in August last.

8. A Memorandum dated 25th March, was sent to the office in question, calling for the papers, and with his letter No. 14 of the 28th Idem, the correspondence (but I regret to say without the *Plan* of the Custom House) was returned, with other papers belonging to the Central office referred for his report, which that Officer then found with regret, to be in his possession.

9. It will now be necessary to obtain from the District Engineer, a copy of the Plan, immediately on the receipt of which the estimate so long, and so discreditably to the Central office lost sight of, will be submitted to Government : I am aware that as the head of the office the responsibility of all such oversights rest solely with myself, but I have to submit, that the Superintending Engineer, whose immediate duty it was to bring forward the projects connected with his own circle, is actually the culprit in having neglected not only to dispose of the papers

requested as to the sum required

at the proper time, but in having removed them from the office, and finally having returned them without the Plan.

10. It may be proper however to observe, in further extenuation, that it is the character (or hitherto has been,) of the Central office of Public Works, for each day to bring its own pressure of Current work to be promptly disposed of, thus causing a peculiar liability to the oversight of papers that may have been removed bodily from the office, more particularly if withdrawn by a functionary no longer in personal attendance at the office. Yet it is so plainly for the benefit of the public service, that Government should have the advantage of local knowledge, and experience, that a reference to an officer singularly capable of satisfactorily disposing of it, however irregular in the particular instance now under report, seems but a venial transgression. In fact the principle of consulting Lieutenant Colonel F. C. Cotton, has been more than once authoritatively enquired by the Government; but it is to be concluded, that his powers of compliance fall short of his abilities, and wishes, and it is also to be apprehended, that the frequency of my own "reminders" is felt to be a very irksome grievance by an Officer whose hands are full to overflowing with his own business.

11. Nevertheless, the culpability of the Chief Engineer is transparent however natural in an office so subdivided, and subject to such numerous changes; and generally it may be predicted, that a too great practical importance has been assigned to an expeditious, and rapid transaction of business in the attainment of which, other equally essential points appear in some measure to have been sacrificed.

12. But the difficulties of an effective and harmonious working inherent in a Central Department, composed of members with almost exclusive administration of particular circles, which latter are liable to repeated transfers by the absences of Officers, have perhaps not engaged the attention or received that indulgent consideration of Government, which antecedent circumstances generally and the personal position of the Chief Engineer might have warranted Colonel Faber, to hope for, if not to expect from the Right Honorable the Governor in Council.

No. 17. ORDER THEREON, No. 929; dated 14th May 1857.

The Government will wait the receipt of the plan and Estimate referred to before passing orders on this reference.

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

Rajahmundry Cubitt

Marine Custom Houses.

Central Office of P.W.
Fort St George 17th April 1857.

3A

No. 11785

From

The Chief Engineer

To

The Secretary to Government
P.W. Department

Sir.

1.— With a letter No. 535, dated 18 October 1835, the District Engineer Godavery Division forwarded with other Estimates one of Rupees 7950—corrected in the Central Office to (8,150) Eight thousand, Six hundred and fifty, for building a Sea Custom House at Coconada in the Rajahmundry District. The plan of the Custom House was prepared agreeably to the orders of Government conveyed in Extract Minutes of Consultation No. 459, dated 21st August 1835, but previous to the receipt of that order, a sum of Rupees 477, had been expended in the preparation of materials, on the sum of Rupees (549 x 12—) Five thousand four hundred and ninety eight, and Annas twelve, sanctioned+ on the 10 July 1834.—

Ft Wm Consn No. 297

2.— In reply to the above letter, in Extract from Proceedings No. 3625, dated 15 December 1835, the District Engineer was requested to state what use was intended to be made of the Master Attendants Office at Coconada, should provision be made for that Officers accommodation in the New Custom House.— Further information was also requested, as to the sum required

required for purchasing the ground on which the new Custom House was to be built.

3. With a letter No 67, dated 21st December 1835 the District Engineer furnished the required information, together with a copy of a letter No 91, dated 8th October 1835, from the Collector of Rajahmundry to the Board of Revenue, on the same subject.

4. An Extract Minutes of Consultation No 233, dated 6th March 1837, Government, in passing Orders on a letter No 4, dated 18th February 1837 from the Collector of Rajahmundry, requested me to report without delay, the actual progress that had been made in building the Custom House up to that time, the manner in which the sum of Rupees 477 before referred to, had been expended, and whether as it appeared from the Collector's letter, the erection of the building had been commenced before the ground on which it stood had become the property of Government. Mr Binns was also directed to proceed at once with whatever formalities were wanting, to complete the purchase of the extent of river frontage which the Government desired to obtain.

5. The foregoing Order was communicated with Extract from Proceedings No 11813, dated 11th March 1837, to the Collector of Rajahmundry, and District Engineer of the Godavery Division, with a request that the latter Officer would furnish the required information.

With

6. With a letter No 119, dated 17th March 1837, the District Engineer furnished the information, and observed, that the revised Plan and Estimate for the new Custom House, were forwarded on the 22d December 1835, but not having been entered in the Budget for 1836/37, he feared they must have been mislaid. He further stated, that the Estimate was entered in his Budget for 1837/38, and expressed a fear, that from all the information called for in Extract Minutes of Consultation No 233, dated 6th March, it must have been again mislaid.

7. On the receipt of this letter, the Records of the Central Office were looked over, and it was found, that the papers connected with the Custom House in question, had been taken to the Madras Mint by the Superintending Engineer Northern Circle in August last.

8. A Memorandum dated 25th March was sent to the Officer in question calling for the papers, and with his letter No 467 the 28th idem, the correspondence (but I regret to say, without the Plan of the Custom House) was returned, with other papers belonging to the Central Office referred for his report, which that Officer then found with regret, to be in his possession.

9. It will now be necessary to obtain from the District Engineer, a copy of the

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Consideration

consideration of Government, which antecedent circumstances generally, and the personal position of the Chief Engineer might have warranted Colonel Faber to hope for, if not to expect from the Right Honorable the Governor in Council.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your most Obed.t Servant

A.R. Faber Colonel

Chief Engineer

Central Office P.W.O.
Fort St George
17 April 1837

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" 13th January — 8 @ 10
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" 20 Novr — /55 — 11 142
" 25 Sept — — 34 037

No 16+17.

C 8th May R. 11th

Ch: Works 1837 Detail
Dr to Cust: Wellan
No 794

From the Chief Engineer
to the Secy to Government
Rev Department

Dated 17 April 1837
Read 21st
From Dr 18th June /57 £ N 125
In Lone 14 July 1837 48
No 11/58

With reference to &c
Mins Corrs: No 233, dated
6 March 1857, explains the
cause of the revised Plan
and Estimate for the new
Sea Custom House at Co:
Canada, in the Rajahmundry
District, not having been
submitted to Government
No 929 With an — Ker 11th Mar

No 929

The Government will
await the receipt of the plan
and Estimate referred to before
passing orders on this reference

J Dn.

Fort St George
14th May 1857

2 Copies to the Chief Engr Dist 15th