1. Number of ...
2. Date of ...
3. Number of ...

M.S.O.1—M 400—18-11-60

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

... DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.		Press Mis.
62-63 Dated		18

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 112. Read the following letter from Major E. LAWFORD, Officiating Chief Engineer; to the Secretary to Government, dated 27th August 1858, No. 3173.

SIR,

Referring to Extract Minutes Consultation No. 1592, dated 11th August 1858, and at the request of the Acting District Engineer of Coimbatore, I have the honor to submit, for the consideration of Government, a Memorandum by Mr. Fraser, dated 20th Idem, complaining of my having acted unjustly and unfairly in representing the delay that had taken place in the submission of periodical papers by that Officer.

1 Original Memo.
1 Copy of do.

2. I admit that it may appear a somewhat harsh proceeding on my part to have thus promptly brought to notice, neglect which certainly did not originate with Mr. Fraser, but at the same time I felt it absolutely necessary to shew that the laxity which has hitherto prevailed and has caused great impediment to the work of the Central Office cannot be any longer tolerated.

3. I annex a memo of the dates of receipt of certain papers from Coimbatore, and though it is true that many of these ought to have been submitted by Mr. Fraser's predecessor, yet nearly three months had elapsed since Captain Francis relinquished charge of the District before my report was written.

4. As to the acquittance for Captain Shand, I must state that it was urgently required by that officer's agents who had become security for him on proceeding to Europe, and as Captain Shand left the department a year ago, there ought to have been no difficulty in the matter, but Mr. Fraser erroneously supposed that it must be given by Captain Francis although otherwise informed.

5. I disavow any unfairness towards Mr. Fraser, and the allusion he makes to my knowledge of the difficulties of his position relates entirely to private communications which can form no ground of excuse for me in any delay in this office.

6. In conclusion, I desire to absolve Mr. Fraser from any imputation of wilful neglect, but I believe that he and many other Officers of the Department are not aware of the serious inconvenience caused by their want of punctuality, and I have no doubt that the certainty of its being noticed will lead to great improvement, and their own ultimate satisfaction.

Letter from WILLIAM, FRASER, Esq., Civil Engineer; to Major E. LAWFORD, Officiating Chief Engineer, dated Coimbatore, 20th August 1858, No. 109.

SIR,

I have the honor to request you will be good enough to forward the accompanying Memorandum to Government.

No. 110.

Official Memorandum.

In an Extract from the Minutes of Consultation No. 1592, on a letter from the Officiating Chief Engineer, the Government censure me for delay in forwarding certain periodical papers; and for not forwarding an Acquittance Certificate for Captain Shand.

As I know that this censure is unmerited, and as I believe the Government would not have passed it, had they been aware of the facts of the case, I deem it due to myself and also to the Government, to forward this Memorandum on the subject.

In the first place, I cannot refrain from remarking that, having been in charge of the District for only about two months at the time the letter of the Officiating Chief Engineer was written, and having come in at the beginning of the official year, when all the returns of the past year had to be compiled in addition to the current business of the office; the charge of neglect of duty, even if well grounded, should have been clear and unmistakable before the unusal and harsh course of bringing it before the notice of Government was adopted.

It does not appear what the periodical papers alluded to are, but they are probably the accounts for the years 1856-57 (A.) and 1857-58, (B.) and the Progress Reports for April* and May* 1858.

(A.) Sent 9th August 1858.
(B.) Sent 21st July 1858.
* Sent 17th and 24th July 1858.

That there was delay in the forwarding of these papers, and that inconvenience must have been felt from their non-reception in the Central Office, I fully admit, but the Chief Engineer was, I thought, aware that this delay arose from no fault of mine, as he was informed of the cause of delay and of the exertions that were being made to hasten their despatch.

The Progress Reports for April and May and the accounts for 1857-58 could not be closed until those for 1856-57 were completed :— These had been prepared by Captain Francis, but he found a discrepancy of about 3,000 Rupees (C)between his account and those of the Collector, and to ascertain how it arose, it became necessary to go through the whole of the accounts again :— For this purpose two of the District Accountant's Department were sent to the Collector's Office, where, with the Head Sheristadar, they carefully scrutinized the accounts, item by item for the whole of the year 1856-57.

(C.) Vide letter No. 61, dated 25th May 1858.

How difficult and tedious this was may be gathered from the facts that, during a portion of the year 1856-57, every Collector and every Tahsildar in the District had the execution of works. That subsequently to the transfer of the Executive to the Public Works Department, the Collector's Department occasionally executed works without the knowledge of the District Engineer; That there were sometimes two or more Executive Officers in a range at the same time ; money being sometimes disbursed to one and sometimes to another ; and, sometimes, the money disbursed to one, was spent and accounted for by another.

In every range more than one Executive Officer had had charge during the year : In the Bhowany range, for instance, no fewer than six had had charge in succession ; each brought in his own Office Establishment, and took it away with him again when he gave up charge of the range.

When we add to these the fact that few of the Executive Officers on the establishments, then in charge are now in the District, it will be readily understood how difficult it was to get information with regard to transaction of which the records were, at the best, scanty, and in many cases not forthcoming at all.

We worked at the accounts unceasingly until they were in a fit state to send up when they were at once despatched and that there might be no delay in signing them when they were closed, I remained here when I ought to have been in other parts of the District.

Under these circumstances, with which I understood the Chief Engineer to be fully acquainted, it was unjust to bring down upon me the censure of Government.

With regard to the Acquittance Certificate for Captain Shand, it was especially unfair to adopt this course, the facts are these.

(D.) Chief Engineer's Memo. No. 1044 dated 10th June 1858.

On the 16th (D) of June 1858, I was directed to furnish an Acquittance Certificate for Captain Shand:—as he had quitted the District in August 1857, and as there was no record of his accounts having been closed, it occurred to me that it would be more satisfactory if Captain Francis, who was still in the District, signed the Certificate ; and I had one prepared and sent to him for that purpose ; and at the same time wrote to the Chief Engineer to say what I had done and why.

I have since learned that it was irregular to send this Certificate for Captain Francis' signature, but I am sure the Government will not, under the circumstance, consider this a very grave offence.

In reply the Chief Engineer did not point out (then) the irregularity, but stated that if I did not send the Certificate at once, the transaction would be sent up for the consideration of Government:—having in the mean time, forwarded Captain Francis' Certificate I considered the whole affair was settled, until the 26th (E) of June 1858 when I was again directed to forward a Certificate, and informed that I was the proper person to sign it.—In the mean time Captain Shand's accounts, (as a portion of those for 1856 57, (F) had been examined, and a deficiency of 400 Rupees discovered : but not being satisfied with this result I directed a further scrutiny, and wrote (E) to the Chief Engineer to explain the state of the account, and that I would withhold the Certificate until they were gone through again.

(E.) Chief Engineere's letter No. 1320 dated, 21st June 1858.

(F.) Mr. Fraser's letter No. 78 dated 9th July 1858.

Eventually the deficiency was reduced to 42 Rupees and Captain Francis having made himself accountable for any deficiency there might be, I forwarded (G) the Certificate : In this matter there was no unnecessary delay whatever, and I think I was justified in withholding the Certificate until the accounts were settled, and until I had Captain Francis' offer to become responsible for the deficiency.

(G.) Mr. Fraser's letter No. 96, dated 10th August 1858.

With regard to the deficiency of 42 Rupees I would here remark that although it is unaccounted for, I am quite satisfied that it was properly expended.

These are the simple facts under which I have met with this censure and if this explanation be satisfactory, I trust the Government will order that censure to be withdrawn.

In conclusion, I would remark that I do not hope for exemption from blame for occasional delay in the transmission of papers :—as business is conducted in this Department, no Officer could possibly avoid this.

For the correctness of the routine business of the Office, I must for a time, be solely dependent on others ; but this I do know that there is not in the Department an Officer more desirous of giving satisfaction in this respect than I am ; and whilst I ask for no unusal indulgence, in these matters, I trust in the justice of the Chief Engineer, that I shall not be subjected to any unusal strictness.

District Engineer's Office, Coimbatore, 20th August 1858.

WILLIAM, FRASER.
Acting District Engineer of Coimbatore.

P.S.—I append the dates of transmitting the Periodical papers as below.

1	Administration Report,	sent on the 17th July 1858.
2	Annual Progress Report for 1857-58,	Ditto.
3	Progress Report for April 1858.	Ditto.
4	Revised Account Current for 1857-58	Ditto 21st July 1858.
5	Progress Report for May 1858	Ditto 24th July 1858.
6	Ditto for June 1858.	Ditto 28th July 1858.
7	Account Current &c for 1856-57	Ditto 9th August 1858.

By which it appears that on the date of the Chief Engineer's letter, the only paper not furnished was the Progress Report for June.

Memorandum of the dates on which the undermentioned documents received from the District Engineer of Coimbatore, were due in the Central office.

Administration Roport, due 5th May 1858, received 21st July 1858.
Annual Progress Report, due 15th June 1858, received 21st July 1858.
Progress report for May, due 15th June 1858, received 31st July 1858.
Progress report for June, due 15th July 1858, received 31st July 1858.
Account Current for May, due 20th June 1858, received 2nd August 1858.
Account Current for June, due 20th July 1858, received 31st July 1858.
Account Current for 1856-57, received 29th May 1858.
Revised Account Current for 1856-57, received 21st August 1858.
Revised Account Current for 1857-58, received 26th July 1858.
Acquittance Certificate for Captain Shand applied for on the 10th June 1858, received 16th August 1858.

Central Office of Public Works : Fort Saint George, 27th August 1858.

(Signed) E. LAWFORD, Major.
Offg. Chief Engineer.

No. 113. ORDER THEREON, No. 1835 ; dated 7th September 1858.

Ordered that the foregoing letter be recorded.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Central Office of Inl. Revenue
27th August 1858

No. 13173

From

The Commissioners of Inland Revenue

To

The Secretary to Government

Sir,

Public. Referring to Ex. Hist. Comm. No. 1592, dated 11th August 1858, and to the request of the Acting Resident Engineer of Coombabeg, Shane Ua Thaidhg to Inchnick, for the consideration of Government a memorandum by Mr Thomson dated 20th Inst., complaining of annoyance & delay that had taken place in the Inspection of periodical papers by Clerk Officers.

2. Inchnick that it may appear a sufficient harsh proceeding on my part to have thus promptly brought to notice neglect which certainly

certainly did not originate with Mr Fraser, but at the same time which it absolutely necessary to show that the capacity which has hitherto prevailed and has caused great inefficiency to the work of the Central Office cannot be any longer tolerated.

3. Annexed a memo of the dates of receipt of certain papers from Coimbatore, and though it is true that many of these ought to have been submitted by Mr Fraser's predecessor, yet nearly three months had elapsed since Captain Francis relinquished charge of the District before my report was written.

4. As to the acquittance for Captain Shand, I must state that it was urgently required by that Officer's agents who had become Security for him on proceeding to Europe, and as Captain Shand left the Department a year ago, there ought to have been no difficulty in

2

in the matter, but Mr Fraser erroneously supposed that it must be given by Captain Francis although otherwise informed.-

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6. In conclusion, I desire to absolve Mr Fraser from any wilful neglect, but I believe that he and many other Officers of the Department are not aware of the serious inconvenience caused by their want of punctuality and I have no doubt that the certainty of its being noticed will lead to great improvement, and their own ultimate

Minute Marks for Letters

Col. St. Geo.
27th August 1858

Mouat Jenner & Co.
Sir,
I am directed to inform
Lawford Esqr
Offg Chief Engineer

To
The Secretary to
Government of

Memorandum of the dates on which the undermentioned documents received from the District Engineer of Coimbatore were due at the Central Office

Administration Report Due 5th May 1858
Received 21st July 1858.
Annual Progress Report Due 15th June 1858
Received 21st July 1858
Progress Report for May Due 15th June 1858
Received 31st July 1858.
Progress Report for June Due 15th July 1858
Received 31st July 1858.
Account Current for May Due 20th June 1858
Received 2d August 1858
Account Current for June due 20th July 1858
Received 31st July 1858
Account Current for 1856/57 Received
29th May 1858
Revised Account Current for 1856/57
Received 21st August 1858.
Revised Account Current for 1857/58
Received 26th July 1858.

Acquittance

Coimbatore

Acquittance Certificate for Captain Shand
applied for on the 10th June 1858
& received 4th August 1858.

Medical Office of P. W.
Fort St George
27th August 1858

Officiating Chief Engr

To
The Secretary to Government
F. F. S.

Enclosure in a letter from the
Officiating Chief Engineer
To
The Secretary to Govt
P.W.D.

3

Dated 27th
Received } August/58

No 3173
PW 1963/58

Memorandum of
the duties on which certain
documents received from
the District Engineer of
Coimbatore were drawn
in the Central Office
of Public Works.

W/58 W 9-10

No. 1835.
Job recorded
7th Sept.
1858

No. 112 & 113.

31st Aug. & 7th Sept.

Notes 1855 Depart.
Cons: 7th Sept. Letter
Num. No. 1963.
The Hon: Chief Sec.
To
The Secy. to Govt. W.P.

Date 27th Aug. 1858
Rec'd 8

No. 3173

Encls: 2 Returned on the
30/9-58

Submitting various
vations, a memorandum
by Mr Power explaining
that he has unjustly and
unjustifiably been represented
relative to the delay
which took place in
the submission of certain
Municipal Returns by that
Officer.

Job recorded