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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2068 Press / Misc.

Dated 5th November 1857.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Memorandum of the conveyance given by Chuna

In the year 1659, the Rajah of Chundra-
gherry invited Mr. Francis Day, the chief of the
English settlement at Madraspatam, to come thither
to celebrate a treaty and granted him a
piece of ground five miles long, one broad,
on the sea coast of the small village of Madraspatam,
whereon to build a town and fort.

This town was called Chinnapatam,
i.e. Chinnapa the patron of the town built on
the said ground. Without waiting for orders from
the court of Directors, Mr. Day set to work
to erect the necessary factory, surrounding it by a
high wall which was defended with four ill-
constructed bastions, and as many gates. In
honour the patron the name of St. Thomas
All this period there were not more than a fish-
ermen's huts at Madraspatam, but the encourage-
ments to settle & the English possessions thus
proclaimed, that for the term of 300 years no custom
or duty should be taken, from whomsoever should buy
"what grain or any the town should"— This ap-
pears to have had the desired effect, for rapidly
colonizing the new settlement.— Mr. Day
for the increasing trade and security of the factory soon

Passage; and called the Fort, to the south and south east, which the natives called the "White Town," in contradistinction to their own residence as "Black Town."— In 1644 the money expended on the fortifications amounted to £ 329[illegible]; and it was computed that 2000 £ more would be necessary to render them impregnable to the native powers & Europeans At this period the Fort was garrisoned by 100 soldiers, but in 1652 there were only 52, which shortly after the number was further reduced to a permanent guard of two men— The agent and council of each factory were entrusted with martial law for the government of the people, till [illegible] Mr Gyfford and Chamber had been respectively holding the position of chief agent, but in 1653 Madras was raised to a Presidency, and Sir Edward Winter was appointed the first Governor— In 1672 a number of officers were introduced into the British service, and trained to the use of arms— In 1680 a ship arrived from England with recruits, bringing out Mr Yeroqt to succeed Sir Edward; the latter however imprisoned Yeroqt and retained possession of the Fort till August 1683, when he delivered it to commissioners sent for the purpose from England— Mr Yeroqt then assumed the government and held it till 1692, when he was succeeded by Sir Thomas Langhorne— The subsequent Governors, see Male Asylum almanac for 1857.—

In 1672 the garrison was increased by the enlistment of sailors from the ships— In 1676 advices were received of another batch of recruits having been sent out; and the Court of Directors prohibited the custom of training natives to the use of arms, and the removal of any officer from a civil to a military situation— In the following year the Mahratta chief, Seraje, hovered within fifteen miles of Madras, intending to make a dash upon it, if opportunity offered; but finding none, quitted the Carnatic soon after.—

In 1681 the first detachment of thirty soldiers was sent to Bengal from the Fort St George— In 1686 the Governor was in anxiety for the safety of the Fort, which was continually threatened by Aurungzebe's Army— In 1690, a troop of Horse, and a company of European Artillery were added to the strength of the Garrison; and during the succeeding two years the country round about Madras was in a most unsettled state.—

In 1693–4, the Court of Directors dispatched recruits with orders to strengthen the fortifications of Fort St George; but no trace of what was done is to be found in any of the records— In 1695 the revenues of Madras amounted to 40,000 pagodas.

The first war at Madras occurred in 1702, between the English and Mahomedans— Daood Khan, Aurungzebe's General, blockaded the place, and said he had orders to demolish it; he was however,

Governor easily repulsed— Gun powder was
first made in Madras; and in 1703 the manu=
facture was so much improved that no more
was sent from England.—

In 1706— Governor Pitt was ap=
prehensive of being attacked by the Arabs fleet,
and strongly represented the weakness of the
Fort— In 1708 there were petty disputes between
the right and left hand Castes, each threatening
to drive the St Thome; the superiority were not granted
In 1709–10 Sarvaal Khan was succeeded
by Daud Khan, as Nabob of the Carnatic, but
nothing particular occurred with Madras appears
to have occurred during this reign— In 1723
the Court authorized a Mint to be erected, and
the Gun powder factory to be repaired and en=
larged— The Fort was also repaired— The Mint
was erected inside the Fort Gate near the present
Royal Bastion— The Gun powder manufactory
was carried on by contract at the present village
the Mint in Black Town until blown up by
Lally in 1758.—

In 1741 a large army of Mahrattas
appeared before the Fort and demanded tribute, but
the English repulsed by the fire of their Guns and drove
them off— In 1742 more troops arrived and
the Directors directed the governor to put the Fort in
the best posture of defence, and to give entertainment
to neither Moors nor Mahrattas.—

In the following year an Engineer named
Smith

Smith submitted plans for strengthening the Fort,
and increasing its area from 15 to 30 Acres and
defined this additional area by a rampart which
he dug and faced with bricks— He traced out 4
new bastions, one on each side of the N. E. and N. W.
flanks, and two on the west— These were after=
wards called the Royal or mint Bastion; Pitts,
Lawrence and the Nabob's bastions— All these
works were carried on as high as the berm, but
from financial reasons were then discontinued;
and Orme states that at the commencement of
hostilities "the naked ditch remained neither
an obstruction nor defence"— On the breaking
out of the war between England and France in 1746,
Dupleix Bourdonnais, the Governor of Mauritius, appeared
in the offing with a large fleet and squadron the
town, but without doing much damage— All this
period the trade with England had raised Madras
to great opulence and population— There were
250,000 native inhabitants in the Companys territories
while the English did not exceed 300 in number, 200
of whom were the soldiers of the garrison.—

In the following February the French squadron
again appeared before Madras with 3500 troops, con=
sisting of 1100 Europeans, 400 Caffres and 400 Natives,
with 800 European Mariners— They landed at St
Thome and bombarded the Fort on the west side from
a battery of nine pounders and on the south from five

mortars

harbour, and on the east from the Ships in the roads—
On the 11th the Fort capitulated when it was agreed
that the English should surrender themselves prisoners
of war, and the town be delivered up, subject to ransom.
The English only lost four or five men, and the French
none— Dela Bourdonnais and Dupleix, the Governor
of Pondicherry differing as to the terms of the ransom, it
was eventually declared null,— The English were
compelled to deliver up accordingly the keys of the
Fortress and every thing belonging to it, except
personal clothes & jewels, & it was stated that the French
were obliged to pay under £2,000 ea— Some of the English
refused their parole and escaped to Fort St. David,
whilst the Governor and several of the principal in-
habitants were taken prisoners to Pondicherry— At
the end of the year the Dutch, under Mynheer Adam,
threatened to attack the French at Madras, and
proclaimed their intention of assisting the English—
A plan is here attached shewing the country
the old Fort, and the works which were constructed
ted when the place was surrendered to the French—
Paradis was appointed French Governor, and he
added considerably to the strength of the fortifications—
On the loss of Fort St. George, the British
Presidency was transferred to Fort St. David, and
about this period the natives were first enrolled as
Sepoys under the English banner— In 1748 Major
Lawrence arrived at Madras, with reinforcements,
but

but on proceeding southwards was taken prisoner by
Dupleix and carried to Pondicherry— In 1749
hostilities ceased— Lawrence was released and,
together with Wynch and Westcott, were appointed
commissioners to receive back the Fortress—
The fortifications were found to have
been much improved during the two years they
were occupied by the French— The bastions and
batteries had been enlarged and strengthened;
part of Black Town had been destroyed, and with
its ruins an excellent glacis on the north side
had been formed, and Palisades and covert ways
in front of the two north gates had been constructed.
A glacis on the south had also been commenced;
but still the defences were very inferior and in-
capable of making much resistance against a
regular European force, nor had any extension
been made of the internal area, which in 1758
did not exceed 15 acres—
In 1750, Mr. Benjamin Robins arrived
from England as Engineer General— He immed-
iately planned the improvement of Fort St. George,
but did not live to carry the work out— Some con-
siderable time elapsed before any thing was
done, but in 1758 the apprehension of another
attack from the French, compelled the Governor
in Council to strengthen the fortifications— For the
next three years 1000 work people were constantly
employed

employed in partially carrying out the works proposed by Vauban.— The trace of the Fort at the commencement of the last war in 1758 was a semi decagon, closed at the gorge by the sea face.— The state of the fortifications at this period is minutely described in the following account from Arner, Vol 3. page 402.—

"To join the new ramparts with the old bastion to the S.W. and to gain the ground in the new area which was occupied by the river, its bed was filled up, beginning from the S.W. bastion, with earth dug from the edge of the rising ground of the Black town to the north-west, which the excavation removed 40 yards farther from the works: but only two-thirds of the bed of the river under the old wall had been choked up. The river, stopped in its former channel, was directed in another, which surrounded the west and part of the south face of the new works, washing in some places the foot of the glacis, until it rejoined its former bed at the head of the spit of land. The old wall of the western side still remained as a retrenchment to capitulate on, in case the outward should be carried.— The new extension on this side comprised three large bastions and their outworks.— The southern of these three bastions communicated with the old bastion, which stood before on the S.W. angle, by the curtain raised

across

across the former channel of the river; and this curtain increased the south face of the Fort from 150 to 210 yards. Nevertheless, the works on this side were much less defensible than those to the west and north; but the surface of water and quagmire in the river before it, rendered this front more visible, excepting by the labours of a much greater army, than the present attack.— The ground on the north of the Fort gave the besieger much more advantage than on the other sides; and this face was therefore strengthened in proportion: the two former bastions and ram part, were proved and kept by the Swedes, were suffered to remain; but the ditch and glacis which they had dug and raised, were, the one filled up, and the other removed farther out, to admit better works.— On the front of the S.W. bastion was raised another capable of containing 25 guns; each of the faces were 100 yards in length, and a battalion might be drawn up on its ram part, although a large vacancy was left in the gorge, or back part, to increase the interval towards the former bastion behind, which thus was included to cover it was, from its superior strength, called the "Royal bastion."— A demi bastion, corresponding with the Royal, was raised before the old bastion, that stood on the beach of the sea, which however, the demi bastion did not entirely conceal, for its right hand or east face extending in a line

parallel

[illegible] to the sea, adjoining to the Shoulder angle of
[illegible] new flanked face of the old bastion, leaving this face
[illegible] to fire forward, but confining the extent of
[illegible] from discommanded to the same width as the space between
the east face of the demi bastion and the sea: to the
westward, the old bastion had two Guns clear of the
demi bastion, which supplied the defence on this side
by four guns in the flank, and seven in the northern face.
The two new bastions communicated with each other
by a broad Traverse that passed along the foot of the
old curtain part and bastions; this traverse was de-
=signed to be a stout parapet seven feet high, which
adjoined to the flanks of the new bastions. The ditch
on this front was dry, because the ground here was seven
feet higher than the level of the canal which supplied the
ditches to the west and south; but a cunette or trench,
seven feet deep and 25 feet broad, was dug the whole
length of the ditch, which before the Junction was
150 feet wide, and before the bastions, ninety. The
covered way of this front was broad and well palli-
=saded, and contained between the two bastions a
large traverse capable of 18 Guns, nine in each of the
faces. The glacis was excellent, and little was
wanting to complete the defences on this side, ex-
=cepting mines, which the want of time and brick-
=layers had not allowed. The western face had
likewise its covered way palliseaded and glacis,
and contained three traverses; which that in

the

the middle was the largest. The eastern face
extended along the beach of the sea within the reach
of the surf; but ships could not approach near
enough to batter it with any effect; and no guns could
be brought to bear upon it by land. Before the
sea gate, which stands in the middle of the curtain,
was a battery of 12 Guns; eight yards on the right of this
battery was a platform of old standing, with 11 guns to
return salutes, which had hitherto been kept without
a parapet: the original curtain, although nothing more
than a brick wall four feet thick, had never been
thoroughly battered, six feet deep and ten wide,
had lately been dug before it; and a ditch, with palli-
sadoes, was intended to have been carried round the
battery and the platforms, but had not been executed.
at either. The only danger on this side was from a
sudden assault or surprize, which rarely come by boats
landing unaware across the surf; but always, and
with ease, by a body of men passing on the edge of it
by either of the bastions at the extremities; to prevent
which, a row of anchors, backed by pallisades, and
a trench were extended from the neck of each bastion
quite into the surf. The buildings, except those
had been raised in the new ground taken into the
westward; and in these of the old, the bomb proof
lodgments were not sufficient for the security of
the garrison."

The foregoing was the state of the fortifications

&c.

in December 1758, when the French army appeared under the personal command of Lally — It consisted of 3500 Europeans — 2000 Sepoys and 2000 Mahrattas and European cavalry — In all 9500 — The defenders of the Garrison on the other hand amounted to only 5941, of whom 1105 were English, 553 Topasses and 624 Gingalese, and 2000 Sepoys besides 150 men Military & Pilots, Lascars Slaves and about 2000 of the Nabob's Horse — The defence was entrusted to Governor Pigot, assisted by Engineers — The attack commenced on the 12th December 1758 and the Garrison was exclusively confined to the north side of the Fort — The enemy's largest battery, consisting of 15 Guns and 6 Mortars, was placed near the present office of Parry and Co from whence zig zags and parallels were pushed forward to the N. E. bastion — Another battery of 4 guns was planted at the Obelisk near Popham's Broadway — A third, of 10 Guns, 500 yards to the N. E. near the present Patchaiyah's Tank; and a fourth close to the present General Hospital — There was also a battery of two heavy guns on the south side of the Cocoanut Tope, which was manned from a detachment, which had taken possession of the Company's Gardens, the site of the present Government House —

"Mr. Wall was the Chief Engineer on the side of the British, and his journal of the siege will be found in Cambridge's War in India," published in 1762, together with a detailed Plan of the Fort as it then stood — The siege was raised on the 17th February after the

Garrison

13

Garrison had been shut up by Lally, and the enemies batteries had been opened 46 — The sudden arrival in the road of a convoy of British ships destined to Bengal hastened the enemies retreat, who after setting fire to the gun powder magazine, decamped towards Pondicherry, having left behind 52 guns, most of their ammunition, and all their wounded — During the siege the French fired 21,556 rounds of cannon, 5702 shells and 1900 hand grenades — The musketry expended — 200,000 cartridges — 178 barrels of gun powder were used and 81 pieces of cannon and five Mortars had been dismounted — The French fired 800 shells chiefly directed against the buildings in the Fort, in which nearly every house was demolished — The British lost in killed, wounded and prisoners 592 Europeans, and 736 Natives, besides 401 deserters, but the French by no means correctly ascertained —

This ended the last siege of Fort St. George, since which time it has never been attacked although occasionally threatened by the French, and approached very near by Hyder Ally in 1767 and 1781 — As was to have expected on the close of so memorable a defence, the Fort was found to be in the most dilapidated state, and it was eventually determined by the Court of Directors and the Madras Government, that it should be thoroughly repaired upon the most approved plan and according to the best modern system of fortification;

at

at the same time the utmost economy was strictly enjoined — In 1760 the Court ordered compensations to be granted to the inhabitants of Black Town for their houses destroyed to clear the esplanades, and that for the future no encroachments should be allowed —

The records of the office of the Command= -ant of Engineers commence with a letter from Mr. St Leger the Chief Engineer in 1760, wherein that officer deplored the insufficient state of the works and the slow progress made; and he recorded his opinion that great blame and responsibility would rest upon the authorities if ever Madras was again placed in the same dangerous insecurity it was in 1758. — From the records of the Presidency from Fort Saint David to Fort Saint George in April 1752 page due 632 2/4 or 322 1/2 pagodas had been expended on the fortifications, but part of this sum had been incurred for the siege, while all the disbursements for Military stores was also included — Mr. Call considered it would take 600 pagodas to render the Fort thoroughly defensible, and complete with Barracks, Magazines &c.; and that some idea of the enormous cost might be guessed by the expenditure already incurred. —

In 1762 the Court of Directors were alarmed at the encroachment of the sea to the walls of the Fort, and were doubtful whether any works garrisoned

be a sufficient barrier to arrest its progress — The western Bastions and Curtains were completed and it was proposed during the succeeding year to proceed with the works required for fortifying the south side of the Fort — Several designs for this work were submitted by Mr Call, but having been summoned to join the army near Madura it does not appear which plan was selected, or that much progress was made during his absence — On his return he resumed charge of the works reported that the following had been com= -pleted during his absence viz. The body of the north Rabelin; the barrack for guard room and magazines; the passage of the Sallyport; the bridge and the gallery communicating with the ditch; the Rampart; the facing of the parapet with chunam without the Banquets; the formation of the merlons and embrasures; the addition to the north west bastion within the demi gorge; the continuation of the north curtain to the middle gate; the parapets and embra= -sures there and there at the Royal Bastions, including the bomb proofs and magazines; the fausse bray between the Royal and Queen bastion, and a gate way opened through to the north traversing; the coupee with its banquets on each side, and the traverses

near

on the gorge, the wet ditch 57 feet broad and 7 deep had been faced all round on both sides before the demi bastion; also the royal bastion and the bomb proofs the officers barracks, together with considerable repairs and renewals to the civil buildings in the Fort.

After thus enumerating the above completed works, Mr. Ball proceeded to recommend that the ditch around St. George's ravelin should be finished at once; but that in consequence of the general financial pressure, the monthly expenditure on the fortifications might be limited to 2000 pagodas.

In the same year of 1789 that officer urged on government the necessity for having a permanent fortification around Black Town, instead of the then temporary palisades and insecure defence; and he submitted plans for the work then in existence. He calculated that the whole would be completed at a cost of 150,000 pagodas; and recommended that the esplanades should be cleared for a distance of 300 yards all round the intended fortification. According-

-ly

-by the Black Town fortification was actively begun and nearly completed in 1770. The great utility of the work is stated to have become daily more apparent, and the Court suggested that the inhabitants should pay a portion of the expence; but which proposition was afterwards overruled. During the progress of the Black Town fortification little was done to the Fort works, but on the completion of the former the latter were again vigorously resumed.

In the following year Mr. Ball was succeeded by Colonel Roy "a gentleman of great character and repute in his profession" who submitted revised plans for the completion of all the Fortifications as they now exist, and by whose energy and skill they were successfully brought to completion in 1797.

For further particulars regarding the descriptions armament and present state of the Fortifications I beg to refer to the following documents already submitted to Government by Colonel Faber

Cate

Late Commandant of Engineers with
his letter No. 91 of 23rd April
1856

1 Description of Fort St George
2 Statement of the supposed cost of
the fortifications
3 Memorandum Shewing the number
of Guns mounted in the enceinte
and outworks, and the number
required to complete its arma=
=ment and Cots and those
that can be located within
the Curtain and outworks.
4. Extract from the reports of the annual
Committee on the Fortifications
from the year 1850. to 1851.
5 Notes on the State of the delapidati=
=tions of the Fortifications of
Fort St George

Fort St George.
29th Feby 1857

A. O. Rawlinson, Captain
Garrison Engineer.

From
The Garrison Engineer
Fort St George

A Memorandum of
the early history of
Fort St George.

Dec 1857

Refer two plans

10 Nov 1857
No 22-23

Comd 5 Dec 1857
Rec 5 Dec
Comp 5 December 1857

No 2068