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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.
Recd 27/11/38

G.O. No. <i>2641</i>	<u>Press</u> <u>Mis.</u>
<i>14-15</i>	
Dated <i>11-11</i> —	18 <i>S.</i>

Not to be folded or roughly handled*91*

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
for the month of November 1859.*

No. 14. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department, dated 4th November 1859, No. 3907.

Observing that the European non-commissioned officers of the Sappers and Miners are not excluded from competing for the stipendiary studentships in the Engineering College at Madras. } (Vide Military Proceedings from 1st to 10th November 1859, Nos. 92-93.)

No. 15. ORDER THEREON, 11th November 1859, No. 2611.

Ordered to be communicated to the Chief Engineer for information.

(Signed) W. C. SIM,
Ag. Dy. Secretary to Government.

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MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following:—

Memo. from the Adjutant General of the Army, 3rd November 1859, No. 367.

The Commander-in-Chief has the honor to forward for submission to Government a letter from the Officer Commanding Sappers and Miners, bringing to notice the disadvantages his European Non-Commissioned are under from not attending the new Civil Engineering College at Madras, also a letter with memorandum from the Principal of the College, offering his observations on the above communication from Captain Hill.

2. His Excellency concurs in the views expressed by the Principal, Captain Winscom, and recommends that the suggestions of that Officer be sanctioned.

From the Officer Commanding Sappers and Miners, Dowlaishweram, 15th October 1859, No. 584; to the Adjutant General of the Army.

I beg respectfully to offer for the consideration of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief the following remarks on the state of the European Non-Commissioned Officers attached to the Corps under my command, in the hopes that His Excellency will be so good as to lay the whole matter before Government with a view to its final disposal.

These men originally enlisted for the Artillery and Infantry and afterwards selected as Engineer Soldiers, after going through a course of instruction at Chatham are sent out to India and located at the Sappers Head Quarters for the purpose of being instructed in Surveying, Plan Drawing, &c. Their number generally averages from 10 to 15.

Up to the time of appointing a Principal for the new School of Civil Engineering, the Sapper Head Quarters Establishment was the only authorised place of instruction, and the course gone through there was the only one by which the Sapper Non-Commissioned Officers were considered eligible for the appointment of Overseer in the Department Public Works.

Instead of the gradual extension of this Embryo Military College, it was decided by Government that a separate institution for Civil Engineering should be established, and this new College having now been successfully working for some months, it behoves me to represent the extent to which the Non-Commissioned Officers of Sappers are affected by it.

The Order which gave effect to His Excellency the Governor's wishes regarding the selection of men from the European Regiments in the Presidency altogether ignored the existence of the Sappers at Dowlaishweram, the whole body of whom were probably as well or better fitted to pass the preliminary examination than the majority of those admitted.

Instead therefore of these men, who it must be remembered have already been selected in England, retaining their previous chances of employment in the Dept. Public Works they are since the establishment of the Civil Engineering College, manifestly at a disadvantage. It is true that the rules of that College allow examinations to be held in any station where a qualified Candidate may be forthcoming, but it is unnecessary to state that in our small Establishment the same advantages as to instruction are not available, and even if equally good masters were sanctioned, the scholars here could never hope to compete successfully with those trained in the Establishment and under the immediate superintendence of the Officer by whom the examination papers are prepared. The system under which these latter Candidates are instructed, and the matter imparted to them is naturally that which must ensure success.

Under these circumstances, I would respectfully recommend that in order to give the Sappers an equal claim with men of other Regiments, they be all entered at the Civil Engineering College. The extra trouble entailed by a dozen men more or less at that institution is, I presume, not of sufficient importance to make it advisable to retain a second Establishment at Dowlaishweram. At this moment some order on the point becomes the more necessary because I feel confident that the place of the late Conductor Kennedy (who up to the time of his death had charge of the Survey School) cannot easily be filled up. Should however Government approve of the transfer of the few European Sappers to Madras to be placed under the control of Captain Winscom, the instruction of the young Sapper Officers and general Supervision of the Native Sapper Scholars, can conveniently be provided for by a Serjeant Instructor instead of requiring as heretofore the services of a Warrant Officer.

It is scarcely necessary to explain that the European Non-Commissioned Officers do not practically belong to the Corps of Sappers, they are indeed borne on my Rolls, but out of the whole number of 80, only about a dozen of the Juniors are ever at Head Quarters, and these remain there only for instruction, being in their turn appointed to the Department Public Works to make room for a fresh batch of Recruits. These men therefore have nothing whatever to do with the actual constitution of the Corps. The only exception to this rule is, that occasionally on active service in the Field two Non-Commissioned Officers are sent with a Company, but even these are necessarily inexperienced being perhaps the Senior of those at Head Quarters, and are generally employed by the Company Officers in Office work or in the execution of Surveys &c. rarely in charge of working parties, which are commanded by the Native Commissioned and Non-Commissioned ranks. Taking all this into consideration, I beg respectfully to express my opinion, that there can be no sound argument for keeping these men at Dowlaishweram to their own serious disadvantage, when their education can be so much better conducted at Madras, and I trust His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will be so good as to represent the matter in this light to Government.

Memo. from the Principal Civil Engineering College, Sepakkam, 24th October 1859, No. 694.

I quite agree with Captain Hill as to the justice of giving the "Engineer Soldiers" an opportunity of obtaining the special education which the Engineering College is designed to give.

2. But it is to be recollected that they have not the slightest claim upon the Department of Public Works. They are selected for duty with the Sappers, and nothing else.

3. Moreover the manner in which they are selected is not such as to test their real qualifications, either moral or physical; and these, as regards Overseers exposed to more than ordinary temptations and hardships, is of even superior consequence, in my opinion, to intellectual knowledge.

4. I conceive that every opportunity they can reasonably expect or which it is desirable to allow will be given them, if after being one year at Dowlaishweram, and showing during that period uninterrupted good conduct, their names are sent by the Commanding Officer, as fit men to compete at the next examination for entrance into the Engineering College.

If they are really the superior men which they are supposed to be, the majority of successful Candidates will doubtless be found at the Head Quarters of Sappers and Miners.

ORDER, No. 3907, 4th November 1859.

1. The Governor in Council observes that the European Non-Commissioned Officers of the Sappers and Miners are not excluded from competing for the Stipendiary Studentships in the Engineering College at Madras, established in G. O. G. 6th May 1859, No. 175.

2. His Honor concurs in the views expressed in the memo. of the Principal of the College, and approves of the arrangement proposed in its 4th para. being carried into effect.

(True Extract.)

Amoshaufel
Ag. Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant General.

„ Department Public Works. *With 200 fars Copies*

„ Commandant of Engineers.

„ Principal Civil Engineering College.

Dr. 31 Oct 1859 / 29 Nov 1859

Dr. 1859 Oct. 29th
Dr. 20th 1859
No. 2915

Proceedings of the
Madras Govt in the
Military Department

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Dr. 100 } Nov 1859
No. 2915
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No. 2915

European Non-Commis-
sioned Officers of the
Madras Govt are
not excluded from
competing for the
Military Medal
which is the highest
military decoration
awarded
No. 2915. 11th Nov 1859
With me order.

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Order of the Council
for information

Alcides

Dr. 1-29 Nov 1859
11th Nov 1859

Dr. 1-29 Nov 1859
11th Nov 1859