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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. <u>1699</u>	Press Mis.
<u>600-600</u>	
Dated <u>2-7-63</u>	1863.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
29th June 1863.*

No. 640. Read the following letter from Major J. C. ANDERSON, R. E., Superintending Engineer 2nd Division, to Colonel W. I. BIRDWOOD, R. E., Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Ojili, Nellore District, 17th June 1863, No. 28 :—

SIR,

1. I have the honor to bring to the notice of Government the following circumstances relating to a transaction between the District Engineer Nellore and Messrs. Whelan & Co., Madras.

2. In March last a Circular No. 6,334 was addressed by the late Chief Engineer to District Engineers with information as to the terms at which Messrs. Whelan & Co. were prepared to supply materials for Public Works; and District Engineers were informed that any wood work they might order from the firm in question would be inspected and approved by the Assistant to the Chief Engineer if application to that effect was made.

3. Acting in the above information Captain A. S. Moberly, District Engineer Nellore, ordered in April last, thirty-six girders of various sizes from Messrs. Whelan & Co., and requested the Chief Engineer to cause them to be examined, intimation to that effect being at the same time sent to Messrs. Whelan & Co.

4. On arrival of the girders at Nellore the Assistant District Engineer Nellore Range reported that some of them were unsound. It appeared that they contained flaws of various kinds which had been concealed partly by the insertion of pieces of plank, and partly by cement. It is probable that when first built up in this way the defects of the beams would not be easily perceptible, but the action of the weather during the transit had loosened the patches of wood and putty, and the flaws they were intended to hide them became easily apparent.

5. The District Engineer and myself have also inspected the timber, and have pronounced eleven of the thirty-six girders to be totally unsound and unfit for the work for which they were designed. They will not however be entirely useless, but may be sawn up for other works, and charged at two-thirds the cost price. The loss thereby will be 132 Rupees.

6. I believe the timber in question was examined by Mr. Walsh, late of the Chief Engineer's Office, and I would suggest that he be called upon to explain the result of his inspection; should he have rejected any of the girders, there would still be reason for doubting whether they were not forwarded along with the others, as there is no mark on the timber to show that it had been passed.

7. Annexed is a copy of Messrs. Whelan & Co.'s explanation. I refrain from making any comments on their conduct; but I take the liberty of recommending that Executive Officers should be made acquainted with the circumstances of the case, with a view to their taking proper precautions against loss, in their dealings with timber merchants.

From Messrs. WHELAN & Co., to Captain A. S. MOBERLY, R. E., District Engineer Nellore, dated Madras, 8th June 1863.

SIR,

1. We have been favored with your letter of the 3rd instant, and we are exceedingly sorry to hear that the wood is not of a good quality.

2. Mr. Walsh, Sub-Engineer, intimated to us that he would inspect the timber when ready; our Maistry reported to us that a portion of the wood had been cut up, we immediately informed Mr. Walsh, who said that *he would* go and inspect the timber, and on the two subsequent occasions Mr. Walsh was likewise duly informed by us.

3. We now learn from enquiries which we have made that the *duty of inspecting and passing* the first twenty beams was entrusted to a *Native Maistry* of the Public Works Department. Had it been intimated to us that a Native Maistry would be sent to report on the wood we would have been present ourselves for the purpose of preventing any underhand work; but knowing Mr. Walsh, and believing that he would do us and the Department justice, we did not attend at the timber yard; indeed we were anxious that the selection of the wood should be entirely in the hands of the Department so that subsequently it might not be said that we, in any manner,

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interfered, and we expressed to Mr. Walsh our desire that none but good and sound timber should be supplied. We need scarcely remark that it must be detrimental to our interest to supply inferior or bad articles. It must, therefore, be obvious that we would not follow a course so ruinous to our prospects. If the Department has not paid that attention in selecting wood for their own use, as they ought, surely we cannot be held responsible for the doings of a Native Maistry, who had full liberty to reject any portion of the wood which he thought faulty.

4. The wood advised in our letters of the 13th and 23rd May last was inspected by Mr. Walsh himself, we therefore hold ourselves entirely clear of all responsibility in this transaction, the fault rests not with us but with the parties who passed the timber, and we should have been glad had they rejected the whole of the wood rather than we should have received such unfavorable reports.

P. S.—We may mention for your information that we are Europeans and practical men, and that no Natives are in our firm.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) A. S. MOBERLY, Captain,
Acting District Engineer.

(Signed) J. C. ANDERSON, Major, R. E.,
Superintending Engineer 2nd Division.

No. 641.

ORDER THEREON, 29th June 1863, No. 1,699.

Communicated to the Superintending Engineer 4th Division, who will be good enough to call upon Mr. Sub-Engineer Walsh for a full explanation on the subject referred to in this letter.

(Signed) — W. I. BIRDWOOD, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

Copy
to the
Superintending Engineer 4th Division
1863

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for a full explanation on the subject referred to in this letter.

Superintending Engineer 4th Division
29th June 1863

1863-141

1863 Depd
From the Sub-Engineer
to the Secretary to Govt.
Dated 17th June 1863
Recd 22
Jy 28. Delivered
Bringing to the notice
of Government certain
circumstances relating
to a transaction between
the District Engineer
Mylapore and Messrs.
Mellor & Co Madras.

Communicated to the Superintending Engineer 4th Division

With an Encl.
1863-29 June.