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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 3065	Press Mis.
345-346	
Dated 14 — 10 —	18 65.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department.

14th October 1865.

No. 345. Read the following letter from Captain J. F. FISCHER, R. E., Controller of Public Works Accounts, to Colonel C. A. ORR, R. E., Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Madras, 18th September 1865, No. 1,277 :—

SIR,

1. I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the Government Order of the 13th instant, No. 47, appended to a letter from the Accountant General, Public Works Department, No. 1,016, dated the 26th ultimo, and with reference thereto, I beg to refer you to paragraph 9 of my letter to that Officer No. 1,164, dated 8th September 1865, a copy of which has been communicated to you, in which I have explained to him the delay which is now certain to arise in the working of this Office.

2. My application for an increase to the Controller's Establishment in this Presidency has been refused to me on the ground that Colonel Wilkieson, the Officer who lately held the appointment, had already obtained all the aid he considered necessary for the efficient discharge of this office duties; and at the same time, towards me personally, a most injurious comparison between that Officer and myself was instituted, which being wholly beside the question I most respectfully beg to protest against, the more particularly, as the same Government had appointed us both to the same duties; and had all along retained to itself the right of appointing Officers in this Department by selection. Colonel Wilkieson being an Officer much senior to myself in the service, of greater experience in the Department, having held the appointment I now have the honor of holding, and having also enjoyed the opportunity of assisting on the Commission on Public Works Accounts, it would have been a matter of no surprise if I had somewhat failed to come up to the estimation in which the Government hold him; but as I have been considered sufficiently qualified to succeed him in this Office, I must again most respectfully deprecate any further personal comparisons being made between us.

3. But the system of accounts to be adopted in this Department recommended by the Commission, which sat in Calcutta, and of which Colonel Wilkieson was a Member, is not at all the system provided in the Manual of Accounts issued lately by the Supreme Government, and by which the accounts of this Office must be kept. The discretionary power left with this Government has enabled us to simplify the accounts of the Range Offices, and yet for these the Government have found it necessary to more than double the strength of the establishment in each Range, to be somewhat in accordance with the establishments allowed in the Provinces under the Supreme Government for keeping up this system of accounts. Superintending Engineers' establishments have been retained on the same strength as before (excepting the Accountants), with a highly paid Head Accountant and Manager, whilst in this Office alone, on which has devolved at least five times as much work as it before had to perform, and in this opinion, I beg to add, Mr. Foster who lately visited me here fully concurred; the increase I applied for has been refused because Colonel Wilkieson, who had nothing to do with the system of accounts now ordered to be kept here, had considered the present establishment would be sufficient for the system which his Commission had recommended for adoption, and which has been almost wholly set aside.

4. The Appropriation Returns called for by the Accountant General, Public Works Department, are in arrears, because the Auditors of this Office have no time to examine them; the duty which now pertains to them of examining and auditing each Progress Report for each month for every Range, with all its vouchers, at the same time that they must assist in disposing of the Bills of former years' expenditure, and in correspondence with so many more Officers (not including Police and Civil authorities), leaves them very little time to spare for additional work, and if the

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
14th October 1865.*

assistance I have asked for is not granted, arrears of business must inevitably accumulate. The delay in the submission of last year's Returns has already been explained.

5. I would add these Appropriation Returns appear to me to be very useless, they are always in arrears, and the information which they contain is far better shown in our Progress Reports, in which are included the estimated cost of every work, the allotment for the official year, the expenditure in each month and up to every month of the same as the year progresses: if Superintending Engineers were to send in quarterly Returns, showing the allotments made for each Range under the five Budget heads, and a reserve kept in their own hands of the grant for each Division, I am of opinion the distribution of the funds for the Presidency could be more satisfactorily made, and a better check maintained on the cash balances of Range Officers, amongst whom a practice now prevails of keeping up as large a balance as possible in the Treasury, equal to two or three months' requirements. The first of the Returns I have suggested should be transmitted before the 1st June, and the last before the 1st March of any official year, so as to exhibit the allotments made at its commencement, and the final distributions of the funds granted for that period.

No. 346. ORDER THEREON, 14th October 1865, No. 3,065.

ACCOUNT, No. 48.

Recorded, with reference to G. O. No. 3,025, dated 12th October 1865.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Controller of Public Works Accounts.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

*Office of the Controller of
Public Works Accounts.
Madras 18th September 1865.*

*From
Captain J. F. Fincher, R.E.
Controller of P.W. Accounts.*

*To
Colonel C. A. Orr, R.E.
Secretary to Government, P.W.*

*Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of
the Government order of the 13th instant No. 47
appended to a letter from the Accountant
General P.W.D. No. 1016 dated the 26th ultimo
and with reference thereto I beg to refer you to
para: 9 of my letter to that Office No. 1164
dated 8th September 1865 a copy of which
has been communicated to you in which I
have explained to him the delay which is
now certain to arise in the working of this
Office.*

*2. My application for an increase to the
Controller's Establishment in this Presidency
has been refused to me on the ground that
Colonel Waller the Officer who lately held
the appointment had already obtained all
the aid he considered necessary for the offi-
cient discharge of this Office duties; and at
the same time, towards me personally, on
most injurious comparison between that
Officer and myself was instituted, which
being wholly beside the question I most
respectfully beg to protest against, the
more particularly, as the same Government
had*

had appointed no both to the same duties and had all along retained to itself the right of appointing Officers in this Department by selection. Colonel Witherson being an Officer much senior to myself in the service, of greater experience in the Department, having held the appointment I now have the honor of holding and having also enjoyed the opportunity of assisting on the Commission on Public Works Accounts it would have been a matter of no surprise if I had somewhat failed to come up to the estimation in which the Government hold him, but as I have been considered sufficiently qualified to succeed him in this office I must again most respectfully deprecate any further personal comparisons being made between us.

3. But the system of Accounts to be adopted in this Department recommended by the Commission, which sat in Calcutta and of which Colonel Witherson was a member, is not at all the system provided in the Manual of Accounts issued lately by the Supreme Government and by which the Accounts of this Office must be kept. The discretionary power left with this Government has enabled us to simplify the Accounts of the range Offices and yet for these the Government have found it necessary to more than double the

strength

strength of the Establishment in each Range to be somewhat in accordance with the Establishments allowed in the Provinces under the Supreme Government for keeping up this system of Accounts. Superintending Engineer's Establishments have been retained on the same strength as before (excepting the accountants) with a highly paid Head Accountant and Managers, whilst in this Office alone on which has devolved at least 5 times as much work as it before had to perform - and in this opinion I beg to add Mr. Foster who lately visited me here fully concurred - the increase I applied for has been refused because Colonel Witherson who had nothing to do with the system of Accounts now ordered to be kept here had considered the present Establishment would be sufficient for the system which his Commission had recommended for adoption and which has been almost wholly set aside.

4. The Appropriation returns called for by the Accountant General P.W.D. are in arrears because the Auditors of this Office have no time to examine them, the duty which now pertains to them of examining and auditing each Progress report for each month for every range with all its vouchers at the same time that they must assist in disposing of the

Bills

Bills of former years expenditure and in
correspondence with so many more officers
including Police and Civil authorities
leaves them very little time to spare
for additional work and if the assist-
-ance I have asked for is not granted
arrears of business must inevitably accu-
mulate. The delay in the submission of
last year's Returns has already been
explained.

To Government
6th Sept: 1865
Nos 1133 + 1140.

5. I would add these Appropriation
Returns appear to me to be very useless
they are always in arrears and the infor-
-mation which they contain is far better
shown in our Progress reports in which
are included the estimated cost of every
work, the allotments for the official year,
the expenditure in each month and up to
every month of the same as the year
progresses. If Superintending Engineers
were to send in quarterly returns show-
-ing the allotments made for each
range under the 5 Budget heads
and a Reserve kept in their own hands
of the grant for each Division, I am of
opinion the distribution of the funds
for the Presidency could be more satis-
-factorily made and a better check
maintained on the cash balances of Range

Officers

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Officers amongst whom in practice now
prevails of keeping up as large a balance
as possible in the Treasury equal to 2 or
3 months requirements. The first of the
returns I have suggested should be trig-
-gered before the 1st June and the
last before the 1st March of any fi-
-nancial year so as to exhibit the allotments
made at its commencement and the
final distributions of the funds granted
for that period.

Have the honor to be
Sir,

Yours most obedient servant,

Captain R. S.

Controller of Public Works Accounts.

Office of the Controller of
Public Works Accounts.
Madras 18th Sept: 1865.

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W. W. Depasquanti -
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Reference to G. O. No. 30359

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To the Controller of

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July 16th 1882

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