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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1760	Press
64-67	~~Mis.~~
Dated 5-6-	1868 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
5th June 1866.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 67. From the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Department Public Works, dated Camp, Coonoor, 16th May 1866, No. 12.

1. With reference to the Order of Government, No. 1,524 of 11th May, I have the honor to submit the following remarks on the subject of the plans for the new Lawrence Asylum, as it at present stands under consideration.

2. In G. O. No. 1,593 of 18th June 1863, I was made personally responsible for the plans then under preparation, that they should embrace every requirement according to papers accompanying that Order, and sent for my guidance.

3. As stated in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of Extract Proceedings with G. O. No. 2,759 of 21st September 1864, the plans and estimates submitted under those instructions secured the approval of the Principal and Committee of management of the existing establishment, and were considered by the Medical and Sanitary authorities to meet all sanitary and other requirements in most respects.

4. It appeared, however, to Government that the deficiencies of the plans were great, and the proposed expenditure quite disproportioned to the object to be obtained. And orders were issued for preparation of fresh estimates on plans regarding the details of which paragraph 9 of the Proceedings above referred to gave minute instructions.

5. At this stage of proceedings I felt that my responsibility was limited to seeing that the revised papers conformed in every particular to the orders of Government, and embodied all practical improvements suggested by the Sanitary and Medical authorities. But neither myself nor the Architect employed to embellish their elevations could recommend the second set of plans for adoption, in consequence of certain inherent defects in the design, by which the chief faults of the first set were exaggerated, instead of being mitigated or avoided.

6. Mr. Chisholm has now returned to Madras after making himself acquainted with the nature and aspects of the sites, and with the materials at the command of the Executive. And my object in now writing is to express my wish that the stand point from which he is to start with his final revision of the plans may be defined with some precision.

7. It appears to me that, whereas, the original set of plans, for which I am responsible, had passed the ordeal and obtained the general approval of all the Departments concerned, it may be as well to consider whether their design is not capable and worthy of being worked out to a successful issue with mere modifications of their sections, and better treatment of the elevations. I must strenuously advocate the retention of their main feature, viz., a central hall running throughout them from end to end, and from floor to roof: portions of which shall serve as refectories, others as in-door play grounds for the weakly or younger children, or for all in bad weather, and the whole affording the amplest means of ventilation, lighting, and circulation throughout the building, to the interior of which they will supply objects for ornamentation otherwise unattainable. With these views, I should deprecate the narrowing of the halls into mere corridors. And as the original plan for the Female Asylum has to be modified to suit 300 instead of 400

girls, I would utilize the space thus gained by turning one-fourth of the building into a chapel instead of having a separate church at greater cost, the style of which it would be difficult to harmonize with the main buildings.

8. I have discussed this subject with Mr. Chisholm, and find (as is most natural for an Architect of any skill in his profession and love for it) that he would rather be employed in working out a new design of his own, than in merely altering and embellishing the plans of others. While, therefore, I desire, and think it incumbent on me to place on record my own opinion as to the best action to be taken in the present state of affairs, *i. e.*, that Mr. Chisholm should simply do his best to improve on the original design, I have also to add that it might be but fair to allow him also to design, *de novo*, plans for the Female Asylum and Church, either separate or together; the former being of such a nature as to be capable of repetition on a larger scale for the Male Asylum, should it be preferred to the original plan, or to any possible modification of it.

9. And when Mr. Chisholm shall have matured all the details of his plans sufficiently to enable Government to judge of the same, I should be glad if allowed to proceed to Madras to be present at the discussion on the same. My absence from the 7th Division need not exceed one week, during which my usual duties would be carried on; and any week after the first week of June would suit me as regards my other arrangements.

P. S.—It is unfortunate, as pointed out to me by Mr. Chisholm, that the north aspect of the fronts of the main buildings will be so unfavorable as regards exposure to sun and light. But on this very account I believe the original ground plan, in shape like the letter H, will be the most suitable. And at the distance at which alone good views of the entire buildings can be obtained, all ornamentation to the elevation must be given in masses, to have any effect, and not in tracery only.

No. 68. Endorsement of the Superintending Engineer, 4th Division, dated Madras, 21st May 1866, No. 245.

From R. F. CHISHOLM, Esq, C E, Executive Engineer, Presidency, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated 11th May 1866, No. 61.

1. According to the Order of Government No. 1,275, dated the 24th ultimo, I have the honor to state that I visited Ootacamund and returned to Madras yesterday the 14th instant.

2. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday I devoted to an examination of the property and inspection of the site from all points of view, and of the materials prepared, and in course of preparation.

3. With regard to the site—The tops of two hillocks have been cut off to form a level surface, and the material so obtained used to connect them by a road-way. The one chosen for the site of the Female Asylum bears north-east from the Male Asylum site, and is distant from it about 400 feet. The principal points of view from which the building will be seen are on a distant road north of the building, which lies in a direction nearly east and west. The

approach road to the buildings being on side-long ground will not open them to view until the visitor is close up.

4. Taking the above circumstances into consideration, it would seem advisable to make the two main blocks to face the road, or due north, and the church to orientate in the ordinary way. It will perhaps be an advantage if, instead of facing *due* north, the buildings are turned slightly round, so as to catch the morning sun on the principal façades.

5. On Thursday I met Major Farewell, and discoursed with him the merits of the several plans, which led to the adoption of the following conditions and restrictions:—

(1.) That the main building, Male branch, for 400 boys, should be in general plan thus—



(2.) That the Female branch for 300 girls should, if possible, have nearly the same length of façade, and be in general plan thus—



(3.) That the general section should consist of a centre corridor with rooms leading out on either side.

(4.) That all valley drainage on the roof be carefully avoided.

6. With regard to the materials, I regret to say that the bricks are inferior in color, being mostly yellow or buff, and the stone of the locality too hard to be worked. The clay of which the former is made is a black peaty-looking substance. It changes in color generally when burning to white, yellow or buff, salmon, red, purple, and vitrifies black; when the clay arrives at the buff tint it becomes hard and sharp and rings when struck. The red bricks crumble and crack, and the purple bricks crack very badly. From the above it would appear that the earth itself should be a purple red when properly burnt, but as I see no way of separating the quartz, (the apparent cause of cracking,) I think that the most serviceable brick is the buff colored one.

7. Partly on account of the bad color of the bricks, and partly owing to the inferior labor obtainable in Ootacamund, I think it would be desirable to make use of plaster on the exterior, at the same time I would confine the plaster to flat surfaces, and use it very sparingly as an embellishment. I would propose to make all the dressings of burnt veneering of different colors sent from Madras.

8. Colonel Walker, the Superintending Engineer, to whom I explained my views, seemed to wish that the original plans should be again brought forward. These plans were approved of by every one except His late Excellency Sir W. Denison, and were disapproved of by him chiefly on account of the cost. As I believe it is the intention of Colonel Walker to re-open this question, I forward the original plans for perusal. In the meantime I will proceed with the design for the church.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
5 h June 1866.

MEMORANDUM No. 62.

Forwarded through the Superintending Engineer, 4th Division.

(Signed) R. F. CHISHOLM, C. E.,
Executive Engineer, Presidency.

16th May 1866.

5 Plans.

Submitted to Government.

(Signed) A. J. M. BOILEAU, Colonel, R. E.,
Superintending Engineer, 4th Division.

No. 69.

ORDER THEREON, 5th June 1866, No. 1,760.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 13.

1. The Government are of opinion that it will not be advisable to hamper Mr. Chisholm in the preparation of his plans for the Lawrence Asylum buildings with any restrictions, but Colonel Walker's letter will be communicated to Mr. Chisholm for his information, and it will be intimated to him that a central corridor, wide enough to afford space for recreation to the children during inclement weather, or commensurate provision for the same object in some other form appears to be a desirable feature in such a building. Mr. Chisholm will also observe that the grouping of kitchens, wash-houses and such like domestic offices under the roof of the main building, as is done in the original design, is an objectionable arrangement.

2. The Government will be glad to avail themselves of Colonel Walker's assistance when Mr. Chisholm's designs come under their consideration, and Colonel Walker will receive due notice should his presence at Madras be required.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.

Do. do, 4th do., for communication to Mr. Chisholm.
Educational Department.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Public Works Department
1760
Proceedings of the Madras Government.

Under date the 5th June 1866
Read the following
The Superintending Engineer of the 4th Division (Here enter No 12716 May 1866)
Do - of the 4th Division (Here enter No 215721 May 1866)

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C.B.

To
The Supy Engr 7/11/50 ✓
" Do. 4 Dec for
construction of the
Chisholm. Works Plans
" Educational Dept ✓

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Dec. 1st June

P W 1868 Dept
 Pro. of Govt for June
 1868.
 Pro of the Madras Govt.
 D^o June 1868

Pro 674336/1868

Pro my order on certain
 correspondence on the subject of
 Plans for the new Government of
 Madras (Circumstances) -

A. J. C. 69.
 28th May 1868. 1st June 1868.