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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2699.

49-50.

Press
~~Mis.~~

Dated 3-9-1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
3rd September 1867.*

No. 49. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Ecclesiastical Department:—

Directing the closing of the present Portuguese } (Here enter 22nd August 1867, No. 196.)
Cemetery at Saint Thomas' Mount.

No. 50. ORDER THEREON, 3rd September 1867, No. 2,699.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 7.

Communicated to the Superintend-
ing Engineer of the 4th Division.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Superintending Engineer, 4th Division.

230

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Ecclesiastical Department,
22nd August 1867.*

No. 49. Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of the Madras District, to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Sydapet, 9th August 1867, No. 158.

With reference to Proceedings of the Madras Government, dated 18th ultimo, No. 162, calling for a report as to the result of the notice issued for closing the Portuguese Cemetery at Saint Thomas' Mount, I have the honor to state that, a few days subsequent to the issue of the notice, I received a letter from the Officer Commanding the Mount, stating that he had been informed of the notice in question by the Priests, who had applied to him for instructions in the matter.

2. Colonel Fraser, in expressing an opinion that the notice should have gone through him, informed me that the graveyard in question had long ago been reported by the Military authorities as overfull, and that sanction had been accorded by Government, in the Military Department, for the enclosure of a new grave yard, for this denomination of Christians, at the public expense, some time ago, and that want of funds alone had prevented the work being completed; a site for the graveyard, adjoining the new Roman Catholic Cemetery, having been actually set apart and marked off.

3. Colonel Fraser expressed himself fully alive to the necessity for closing the existing burial ground, but requested me to withhold action on the notice, until he could make proper arrangements for the interment of the bodies of any member of the Portuguese congregation who might die before new arrangements could be made.

4. Prior to the receipt of Colonel Fraser's letter, I was not aware that the Portuguese Cemetery was in any way connected with the Military Department, or with the Government at all. I was under the impression that it was under the control of the Priests, and that they were responsible for finding a new site. Had I been aware of the facts as stated by Colonel Fraser, I should certainly have communicated with him before taking any steps in the matter.

5. In reply to Colonel Fraser's letter, I informed him that the notice should stand in abeyance until he was able to communicate with the proper authorities, and obtain sanction for putting the work in hand, or until he could arrange for the interment of the dead of the Portuguese sect in the Cemetery assigned to the Roman Catholic Community. At the same time, I expressed an opinion that, as the site had been determined on, and the erection of the work was only delayed for a time, there could be no objection to interments taking place in the new ground at once, in anticipation of the construction of the wall, due provision being made against the depredations of dogs and jackals by insisting on a sufficient depth of grave.

6. On receipt of the Proceedings of Government under reply, I asked Colonel Fraser to inform me how matters stood, and have the honor to enclose copy of his reply.

7. From this you will see that Colonel Fraser has been in communication with the Priests of both denominations of Roman Catholics. The Priest of the Irish Mission consents to the interment of members of the Portuguese Congregation in the general Cemetery, but not to the performance of the ceremony by the Portuguese Priest. The Portuguese Priest naturally objects to the proposed arrangement.

8. I am not aware of the intention of Government as to the exclusive use of the new Cemetery by the members of the Irish Mission, to the exclusion of the Portuguese, but it seems to me highly necessary that the new enclosure should be immediately commenced, so as to enable burials at once to take place in the new ground, or that a portion of the Roman Catholic ground under control of the Irish Mission, should be set apart for the use of the Portuguese. I request early instructions of Government on these points.

From Colonel D. FRASER, R. A., Commandant, Saint Thomas' Mount, to the Acting Collector of the Madras District; dated Saint Thomas' Mount, 7th August 1867, No. 346.

In reply to your letter, No. 421, 5th instant, I have the honor to inform you that I have sent forward an emergent demand to Government for the immediate enclosure of the space of ground allotted for a new Portuguese Roman Catholic Cemetery, and I am informed by the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General of the Division that an answer may be expected shortly.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Ecclesiastical Department,
22nd August 1867.*

2. On communicating with the respective Roman Catholic Clergymen concerned, the Reverend Mr. Forde, of the Irish Mission, at present in charge of the new Roman Catholic Cemetery, stated he had no objection to the Roman Catholics of the Portuguese Mission being buried in that Cemetery, but that he must himself perform the ceremony.

3. As I had anticipated, the Reverend Mr. DeSouza objected to this *in toto*, and also burying any of his flock in the space allotted before it should be enclosed. He also states that it was intended by Government that he should have the use of a portion of the new Cemetery.

4. Mr. DeSouza's real objection to burying in an unenclosed space is, in my opinion, that the spot in question is just outside the walls of the Roman Catholic Cemetery, and that it would place his flock in an inferior position, according to the ideas of this country and his own, and expose them to taunts of inferiority on the part of the other Roman Catholics.

5. I think myself it would be likely to lead in that manner to breaches of the peace.

6. It was my intention to wait for the decision of Government on the enclosure of the Portuguese burying ground, and, should it be sanctioned, "to direct that burials should take place there as soon as I found the works were commenced." But should it not be sanctioned, then it was my intention to ask Government to state whether Mr. DeSouza was to have the free use of the Roman Catholic Cemetery for burials, or whether it was intended for the exclusive use of the Irish Mission, as appeared to me probable from their having sanctioned a Portuguese one already.

7. Should you be of opinion that the matter is too pressing to wait the decision of Government with regard to the enclosure of the new Portuguese ground, then I will at once refer the latter question; but I think the precautions that I have directed to be taken in the conduct of burials will prevent any injurious effects for the present.

No. 50.

ORDER THEREON, 22nd August 1867, No. 196.

The Government observe that orders have been given in the Department of Public Works for the immediate enclosure of the ground allotted as a burial ground to the Portuguese Church at Saint Thomas' Mount.

2. There are most serious objections to burials being continued in the present Portuguese Cemetery, which, from its overcrowded condition, is already a cause of anxiety to the thickly inhabited neighbourhood. Mr. DeSouza's objections, as reported by Colonel Fraser, would not justify any delay in closing this burial ground, and the Collector will give effect to his notice.

3. There can be no difficulty in using the new burial ground while the work of enclosure is being completed. Until the wall is built, it will be necessary to be careful that the graves are sufficiently deep to secure them from being disturbed by animals.

4. By the G. O., No. 2577, dated 27th July 1864, Military Department, distinct places of burial are allotted to the Irish and Portuguese Churches, and Mr. DeSouza is in error in supposing that it was intended that the Portuguese Church should have the use of any portion of the Irish Catholic Cemetery.

(True Extract).

M. M. M.
Acting Chief Secretary.

Lit. No. 2699

Command to the

Superintendent of the

Grave

To the Collector of the Madras District.
,, Public Works Department.
,, Military Department.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Part 1 of 10
30. Sept 1867

W. S. S. D. S.

Sept 4/9/67

W. S. S. D. S.

W.

No 1864 Department
Proc of Govt for Sept 22nd
No 23292

Pro: In: Govt in the
Ecclesiastical Dept
No 196

Dated 22nd
Recd 30th 3 August 1867

Directing the closing
of the present Portuguese
Country at St Thomas's
Mount

No. 49-50

With an Order

No. 2699 - 30 Sept 1867