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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 3813	Press Mis.
148-149	
Dated 7-12-	1867.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
7th December 1867.*

No. 148. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Ecclesiastical Department :—

Sanctioning an estimate of Rupees 500 for the }
repair of the roof of the Vizianagram Church, } (Here enter 2nd December 1867, No. 282.)
in the Vizagapatam District.

No. 149. ORDER THEREON, 7th December 1867, No. 3,813.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 27.

Communicated to the Superin-
tending Engineer of the 1st Division
for information and guidance.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Superintending Engineer, 1st Division.
„ Controller of Public Works Accounts.
„ Accountant General.

Exd. S. T. Augustin,

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Ecclesiastical Department,
2nd December 1867.*

No. 1. Read the following letter from the Acting Superintending Engineer, 1st Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Fort Saint George; dated Dowlaishweram, 15th November 1867, No. 186.
I have the honor to forward copy of a letter received from the Reverend J. D. Ostrehan, Chaplain of Vizianagram, in which he requests that, instead of repairing the roof of the Church damaged by the recent cyclone at a cost of Rupees 500, it should be re-roofed at a cost of Rupees 1500, and he also states that it would be preferable, were funds obtainable, to re-roof it in such a manner as to bring the Nave into complete uniformity with the Chancel, which has lately been restored at a cost of Rupees 1280; the cost of this would be about Rupees 3000. Mr. Ostrehan's suggestions are supported by the Trustees, Major Applegath and Major Harrington.

- ENCLOSURES 2.
1. Captain Beatty's letter, No. 290, dated 31st October 1867.
1. Chaplain of Vizianagram's letter No. — dated 6th November 1867.

2. I enclose a report on the Church forwarded by Captain Beatty, R. E., and await instructions from Government upon the subject. Vizianagram is, I believe, now constituted the Head Quarters station of the Northern Division.

From Captain J. BEATTY, R. E., Executive Engineer, Vizagapatam, to the Acting Superintending Engineer, 1st Division; dated Waltair, 31st October 1867, No. 290.

I have the honor to report the result of my inspection of the Vizianagram Church, as requested in your letter, No. 828, of 15th instant. The Chaplain was present, with his Lay Trustee Major Harrington, and Mr. Supervisor Hamnett, when I visited the Church on the morning of the 24th instant.

2. I was not able to discover what is the age of the Church, but I learnt from the Range Office records that the old roof was entirely taken off and re-constructed in the year 1861-62. The old wood-work appears to have consisted of palmyra couples and collar beams; and in 1861, Mr. Hudson estimated for putting up new dammer wood trusses, teak wood purlins and ridge beam, and re-roofing with the palmyra pieces of the old roof for rafters, and one-third new reepers and pantiles. This work was completed in 1862.

3. At that time there was no Chaplain at Vizianagram, which appears to have been then an out-station of the Vizagapatam Chaplaincy. The Vizagapatam Chaplain in 1862 was the Reverend J. W. Wynch, who appears to have sanctioned and approved of the work done by Mr. Hudson. A great opportunity of improving the appearance of the Church, such as will not again occur for years, was then lost; for there can be no doubt that, if a fair representation of the case had been made to Government, they would have sanctioned the additional expense attendant on the adoption of a more suitable style of roof.

4. All the trusses, purlins, rafters, &c., are covered with whitewash, the palmyra wood is rough, and not put up with attention to neatness and regularity; many of the pieces bear traces of having been used in the old roof. Altogether, it has an unsightly look, and has always been more the kind of roof for a godown, than what one expects to see in a Church.

5. It is, however, manifest that, appearances apart, the work done in 1862 was well and substantially executed, for it has never since needed repair, and the wood-work was not in any way damaged by the cyclonic gale of the 30th ultimo. Mr. Hamnett informs me that not a single rafter or reeper was broken or displaced, and an expenditure of 35 Rupees only, principally spent on the doors and windows, sufficed to restore the building to its ordinary appearance, with the exception of the marks of leakage on the walls. Some leakage, I am told, had been observed prior to the storm, but of such a trifling nature that it was not reported to this Department.

6. You are aware that that storm was most severely felt at Vizianagram, where it damaged every building in the station and neighbourhood, and left many a total wreck. It is, therefore, not surprising that the tiling of the Church roof, which is the loftiest of all, and, therefore, most exposed to the violence of the wind, should have suffered considerably.

7. A great deal of the tiling of the Church roof was displaced, and in some places the tiles were completely swept off, leaving the wood-work uncovered. This was probably in some measure

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due to the want of chunam borders—stripes of chunam at 18 inches apart along the sides—which would have strengthened the tiling, and prevented any trifling damage spreading.

8. I observed the traces of white-ants on some parts of the palmyra wood, and on the walls. On examination, the walls proved to be of brick in chunam, and I can only suggest that the ants may have found their way to the roof owing to the presence of imperfectly burnt brick in the walls. I would recommend the application of tar, poisoned with arsenic, to the whole of the timber. This would be a protection against insects, and improve the look of the roof.

9. The Chaplain and his Lay Trustees directed my attention to the tie beams of the trusses, which they believe to have sagged. This, of course, cannot be the case, the tie beams bear no weight, and are upheld to the kingposts in the usual way by iron straps and bolts. The trusses have not altered their shape at all since they were put up, and are perfectly sound and uninjured, so far as an inspection from the floor of the Church enables me to judge.

10. But it seems that the present roof, though it has hitherto been a perfect protection from the weather, has long been an eyesore to the Chaplain and some of his congregation, whose refined ecclesiastical taste has been offended by this godown style of roof to the only consecrated building in the place; and as they esteem it a hardship and grievance that they have to worship under it, they naturally regard it to be the duty of Government to provide something better. Mr. Ostrehan, being strongly of this opinion, consulted Colonel Moberly some months back on the subject of getting a new roof of a more ecclesiastical pattern, and received a very favorable reply, but it does not appear that Colonel Moberly ordered the preparation of any estimate for the much desired work.

11. The roof, however, is still serviceable, and it would, therefore, be improper, I think, to recommend the alteration of the wood-work at present. If the storm had seriously damaged the wood-work, and necessitated such an entire re-construction as occurred in 1862, I would not have hesitated to suggest the substitution of something more slightly and even ornamental, instead of merely restoring the existing roof, but present circumstances do not justify more than Mr. Hamnett had already estimated for in the accompaniment of this letter, marked B, which was submitted to the Chaplain, but returned without his countersignature.

12. The repairs I consider necessary are as follows:—

Shifting tiles, and supplying new ones where required; renewing parts of the wood-work found to be decayed or damaged by the white-ants; providing chunam borders to bind the tiling together; white-washing the walls; and repairing the broken doors and windows. The rates and quantities in the accompanying estimate by Mr. Hamnett appear to be sufficient for this work. Tarring and poisoning the wood-work would be an additional charge of about Rupees 1-14-0 per square of roofing.

13. Mr. Ostrehan would prefer an entirely new roof (such as was lately erected at the Berhampore Church) of the sloping terrace kind, and supported on a frame work of neatly dressed dammer wood trusses, purlins, rafters, and planking, at an inclination of 45 degrees. In order to obtain this steep slope, it would be necessary either to raise the ridge 8 feet above its present height, or lower the main walls 4 feet. In the former case, the effect of the new bell tower, designed by Colonel Chambers to suit the existing roof, would be lost; and in the latter, the lowering of the walls and consequent alteration of the side arches of the Nave would add greatly to the cost of the improvements. Mr. Hamnett had prepared an estimate for this new roof, marked A, which I this question is settled, a correct estimate cannot be framed. I am of opinion that in either case Mr. Hamnett's estimate would prove very insufficient.

14. At Mr. Ostrehan's request, I have also framed an estimate, herewith enclosed, marked C, for improving the roof by removing the palmyra rafters and reepers, and re-roofing with dammer but I do not consider it would be any improvement, and to do it well it should be of teak wood, as no seasoned dammer wood is procurable.

15. But I cannot recommend either of these estimates, A and C, for your approval, because I consider that, as the present roof was constructed so recently (only five years since) at Govern-

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2nd December 1867.*

ment expense, with the sanction of the Ecclesiastical Department, and the wood-work shows no signs of decay, while it was in no way the cause of the damage which occurred on the occasion of the recent storm, it would be a waste of public money to put up new wood-work at present, unless Government is prepared to humour every change of taste on the part of the Ecclesiastical Department.

From the Reverend J. D. OSTREHAN, Chaplain, and Majors G. APPLGATH, and E. H. HARRINGTON, Lay Trustees of the Church at Vizianagram, to the Superintending Engineer, 1st Division; dated Vizianagram, 6th November 1867.

The Church at this station has been so much injured by the cyclone of 29th September last, that an estimate for repairs, amounting to about 500 Rupees, has been found necessary, on the inspection of the building by the Executive Engineer, Captain Beatty.

2. He has also, at our request, prepared and forwarded to you two other estimates. One (Rupees 1500) provides for removing the palmyra wood-work in the present roof, and substituting dammer wood and planking. We trust you will support this estimate. The roof, as at present, is not creditable to the Church. It is of bad, rough material and of very inferior workmanship. It is, as you are aware, a couple roof, with flat and pan-tiles and with trusses. The couples and reepers are, we believe, of palmyra wood, roughly cut and very ill-fitted. Many of them seem to have decayed, or to have suffered from white-ants.

3. We would strongly urge that this opportunity should be taken for constructing a roof of better wood, dammer or teak, and it has been thought that planking would be much more sightly and suitable to the Church than flat tiles.

4. The Chancel of the Church has had considerable attention paid to it, and no efforts or expense have been spared to ensure its presenting a more ecclesiastical and creditable appearance than is usual in up-country Churches. The roof is arched, wood-work in the interior, and looks well, though it has not been as well put up as we should have wished. Painted windows procured from London, are now being fitted. It would be a great pity if the body of the Church is allowed to show the contrast of a mean and unsightly appearance, which must be the case, unless the roof is now re-constructed with neat, good, and substantial work.

5. We understand that, were the Church to be roofed on the same principle as the Chancel has been (called the Bengal roof), the estimate amounts to about 2600 Rupees.

6. We forbear to urge this (preferable on many accounts as such a roof would be) on account of the expense; but as the other estimate (Rupees 1500) bears only an inconsiderable disproportion to the one for mere repairs (Rupees 500), we trust it may be favorably considered by Government for the reasons herein advocated.

Referred to the Ecclesiastical Department.

(Signed) C. A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secy. to Govt., P. W. D.

22nd November 1867.

No. 2. ORDER THEREON, 2nd December 1867, No. 282.

The Governor in Council sanctions the estimate of 500 Rupees for the repair of the roof of the Vizianagram Church, which has been damaged by the late Cyclone.

2. The Governor in Council is unable to comply with the application made by the Chaplain for an entirely new roof in order to bring the Nave into complete uniformity with the Chancel. (True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Public Works Department.
" Venerable the Archdeacon.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

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