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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public (Misc) DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 425 Press Mrs.

916-917

Dated 13-9- 1847.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1.Ci

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 13th February 1867.

No. 216. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department:—

Communicating Despatch from the Secretary of State, on the subject of a correspondence which has taken place with the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, regarding a proposal to second Officers of Royal Engineers employed in the Public Works Department in India. } (Here enter 8th February 1867, No. 488.)

No. 217. ORDER THEREON, 13th February 1867, No. 425.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 26. Ordered to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

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

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following papers:—

From the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, India Office, London, 30th November 1866, No. 257; to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor General of India in Council.

I transmit herewith, for the information of your Excellency, copy of correspondence that has taken place with His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, with reference to a proposal to second Officers of Royal Engineers employed in the Public Works Department in India.

2. It will be seen that I have informed His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief that it appears unnecessary to apply the system of seconding to Officers of the old Indian Corps of Engineers, who have been accustomed to employment in the Public Works Department under existing Regulations.

From Major General T. T. PEARS, Military Secretary, India Office, 9th November 1866, No. 3463-709 H; to the Military Secretary, Horse Guards.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th October 1866, in which it is stated that in the system of seconding, suggested in the last paragraph of your letter of 31st July last, it was not meant to carry out the arrangement in the usual sense of that term, but only on an Officer of Royal Engineers being appointed to the Public Works Department, he should be seconded to the extent of ceding all Military precedence arising from Regimental or Army rank (except on Court Martial duty, specially approved by the Commander-in-Chief of the Presidency) during his employment in the Public Works Department, and that His Royal Highness is still of opinion that the adoption of the seconding system to this extent, and of inserting the Officers' names thus employed, in italics, in the Army List, will have the effect of removing all grounds of complaint or misunderstanding.

2. As it appears to be not intended to make promotions in the room of Officers of Engineers so seconded, and the principal objection to the proposal stated in the 3rd paragraph of the letter from this office, dated the 18th August last, is thus removed. Lord Cranborne will offer no further objection to arrangements, from which His Royal Highness anticipates such beneficial results.

3. I am instructed to add, however, that it appears unnecessary to apply the system of seconding to Officers of the old Indian Corps of Engineers who have been accustomed to employment in the Public Works Department, under existing Regulations.

From Lieutenant-General W. F. FORSTER, Military Secretary, Horse Guards, 17th October 1866; to the Under Secretary of State, India Office.

With reference to the 3rd paragraph of your letter, dated 18th August last, I am directed by His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief to request you will have the goodness to inform the Secretary of State for India in Council that in the system of "seconding" suggested in the last paragraph of my letter of 31st July last, it was not meant to carry out the arrangement in the usual sense of that term, but only, that on an Officer of Royal Engineers being appointed to the Public Works Department, he should be seconded to the extent of ceding all Military precedence arising from Regimental or Army rank (except on Court Martial duty, specially approved by the Commander-in-Chief of the Presidency) during his employment in the Public Works Department, in accordance with the 6th paragraph of the preliminary remarks of General Corps Order, No. 462, in which the word "seconded" might be advantageously introduced.

2285-469, H.

I am to add that His Royal Highness is still of opinion that the adoption of the "seconding" system to this extent, and of inserting the Officers' names thus employed, in italics, in the Army List, will have the effect of removing all grounds of complaint or misunderstanding.

Should Lord Cranborne see no objection to this proposal, His Royal Highness will communicate on the subject with the Secretary of State for War.

From Lieutenant-General W. F. FORSTER, Military Secretary, Horse Guards, 31st July 1866; to the Under Secretary of State, India Office.

1851-375*H*.

I am directed by the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, and in reference to the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs thereof, His Royal Highness requests you will submit to the Secretary of State for India in Council the necessity which appears to exist for a re-consideration of the rules under which Officers of the Royal Engineers are admitted to the Public Works Department in India.

According to the present system, an Officer of zeal and ability may, after serving for some time (under existing Standing Orders,) with the Native Sappers in India, or even on active service in that country, find when he is appointed to the Public Works Department, that he is junior in the Department, and consequently holding an inferior position in respect to responsibility to other Officers who may not only be junior to him in the Corps, but also as to the date of arrival in India.

His Royal Highness would therefore suggest for Viscount Cranborne's consideration, whether the bad effect of the present system might not be entirely obviated either by grading Officers of Royal Engineers on first appointment to the Public Works Department, according to the dates of their respective commissions, or by the adoption of the system of "*seconding*," which is accepted in all branches of the service as annulling Military precedence.

From Lieutenant-General W. F. FORSTER, Military Secretary, Horse Guards, 21st June 1866; to the Under Secretary of State, India Office.

Major Maunsell, 23-4-66, *and enclosures.*

I am directed by the Field Marshal Commanding in-Chief to transmit to you, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for India in Council, the enclosed papers which have been received from the Commandant of the Sappers and Miners in Bengal, by the Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Engineers, and to offer the following remarks on the same.

Referring to that part of Major Maunsell's communication on the subject of Lieutenants Rogers' and McCullagh's complaints, it appears to His Royal Highness clearly unjust that if an Officer of Royal Engineers on landing in India should be ordered on service, or on any important duty, he should, on its completion, find himself placed in the Public Works Department as junior to other young Officers, who, though landing in India subsequently to him, may have joined the Department at once; His Royal Highness would suggest therefore, that in view to prevent such supersession, and to obviate any chance of an Officer losing his position in the Department from the accident of his being required for service, or other temporary employment, on his first landing, all Royal Engineer Officers may be brought on the list for the Public Works Department from the date of their arrival in India.

The questions raised in the 3rd and 4th paragraphs of Major Maunsell's letter have already been dealt with in former correspondence, and require no further comment; and as regards the reduction of tests recommended in the concluding paragraph, His Royal Highness fully concurs in the views expressed by that Officer, as communicated in my letter, dated 14th May 1866.

On reviewing the position of the Royal Engineers in India, it appears to the Duke of Cambridge that it would be of very great advantage to the service, and much to the interests both of Officers and men, were the Corps represented at the Head Quarters of the Army in India by a Staff Officer, who, under the orders of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, might be in direct communication with the Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Engineers, at the Horse Guards, and through whom all correspondence with this country should pass.

The enclosures of this letter will not fail to show Earl de Grey the unsatisfactory manner in which the men of the Royal Engineers have been provided for on their arrival in India, and the doubtful position they hold; and His Royal Highness cannot but consider that much of the difficulty which had arisen in connection with these men is due to the want of such an Officer on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief.

His Royal Highness would suggested therefore, for the favorable consideration of Earl de Grey, that an Assistent Adjutant General of Engineers at Head Quarters may be sanctioned, and that to ensure the services of an Officer of proper standing and ability, His Royal Highness recommends that the Staff salary attaching to the post may be that of an Executive Engineer of the first class.

I am, in conclusion, desired to draw attention to the fact that out of 29 men sent out last year only 4 appear to have been, up to the present time, admitted to the Thomason College, and that the valuable services of the remaining 25 have been lost for a very long period, and this is in itself, I am to remark, enough to deter good men of the Royal Engineers from volunteering for service in India, as will prove to be the case, unless a standard for examination at Chatham is fixed, by passing which, the men on arrival shall be admitted to the College forthwith.

In regard to the few men who have applied to return to the ordinary duties of the Corps, His Royal Highness is of opinion that they should be transferred to the Company of Royal Engineers at the Mauritius as the nearest station, and I am to request that, under the orders of the Secretary of State, measures may be taken with this view.

I beg the favor of your returning me the enclosures.

From Major General T T. PEARS, Military Secretary, India Office, 14th July 1866, No. 1851-375II; to the Military Secretary, Horse Guards.

I am directed, by the Secretary of State for India in Council, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st June, forwarding certain papers received by the Deputy Adjutant General of Royal Engineers, direct from the Commandant of Sappers and Miners in Bengal.

2. With his letter, dated 23rd April, Major Maunsell, the Commandant of Sappers and Miners, refers to complaints made by Lieutenants Rogers and McCullagh of the Royal Engineers, which are not among the papers now received, but which it appears relate to their employment and position in the Public Works Department.

3. Upon this point, I am to request that you will inform His Royal Highness that the Public Works Department in India is considered entirely as a Civil Department, that, as regards the Officers, Civil or Military, employed therein, it is not considered a seniority department, and that Officers joining it are placed and advanced according to their presumed qualifications.

4. The rule and practice of the Department in this respect would doubtless have been explained to Lieutenants Rogers and McCullagh had they made a representation to the local authorities.

5. The other questions raised in Major Maunsell's letter will, it is believed, be disposed of by the proposed despatch to India, draft of which was forwarded with my letter of 22nd June last, and by previous despatches upon the same subject.

No. 336, II.
1397.

6. With respect to the suggestion that an Assistant Adjutant General of Engineers, at the Head Quarters of the Army in India, may be sanctioned, with a Staff salary equal to that of an Executive Engineer of the 1st class, I am instructed to observe that the number of Non-Commissioned Officers and men of the Royal Engineers at present serving in India is very small, and that the extent to which they are likely to be required and employed has not been fully determined.

7. Before offering any opinion, therefore, upon this point, Lord Cranborne would desire to have that of the Government of India, to whom your letter will accordingly be forwarded for report upon this point.

8. In the meantime, I am to request you will point out to His Royal Highness that the practice in India has hitherto been for all questions of a Military nature connected with the Corps of Engineers to be disposed of in the Adjutant General's Office, without the aid or intervention of a Staff Officer of Engineers.

Enclosures returned.

From the Assistant Military Secretary, India Office, 18th August 1866, No. 2285-469II; to the Military Secretary, Horse Guards.

I am directed, by the Secretary of State for India in Council, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, relative to the position of Officers of the Royal Engineers in the Public Works Department in India, and in reply to point out, with reference to the 1st suggestion in that communication, that the Public Works Department in India consists of Officers of Royal Engineers, of Staff Corps Officers, and Officers of the Cadres of the Indian Army, also of Civil Engineers.

2. That, under these circumstances, to grade the Royal Engineers only according to the dates of their respective commissions, would be inconsistent with the position of the other Officers, and to grade all the Officers by seniority would be equally inconsistent with the organization of the Department, which is purely a Civil one, and would moreover certainly cause injury to the Engineer Officers, who at present, in consideration of their professional training, have some preference in selection for appointments in the Public Works Department.

3. With respect to the second suggestion in your letter, that of seconding the Engineer Officers employed in the Department, I am instructed to observe, that those Officers in joining a Civil Department waive their Military precedence, in the same way as seconded Officers of the Corps in England do; and further to point out that, if all the Officers of Engineers who join the Department of Public Works in India were seconded in the usual sense of the term and promotions made in their room, the effect would be nearly to duplicate the establishment, and to provide more unseconded Officers than could possibly be employed on merely Military duties.

4. I am, at the same time, instructed to add that if after consideration of the objections now urged against either of the courses suggested in your letter, His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief should still be desirous that his suggestions should be submitted for the opinion of the Government of India, Lord Cranborne will be prepared to defer to the wish of His Royal Highness, and will transmit a copy of your letter for the consideration and observations of that Government.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT, THE 15TH JANUARY 1867.

No. 405.

Copy of the above forwarded to the Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, Military Department, for the information of the Right Honorable the Governor in Council.

(By order,)

(Signed) B. E. BACON, Lieut-Colonel,

Offg. Depy. Secy to the Govt. of India.

ORDER, No. 488, 8th February 1867.

Communicated to the Commander-in-Chief and Department Public Works, for information.

(True Extract.)

Major General,

Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant General.
" Public Works Department. with 20 spare Copies.

Exd. A. W. Cooke.

76

Communicates
Despatch from the Secy
of State on the subject of
a Correspondence with
her Britn Majs Govt
Field Marshal Comdg in
Chief regarding a Postmaster
to Head Offices of Royal
Engineers Employed in
the Province during the
year 1866.

No 216-21

Ordered to be recorded —

Govt. St George
13th Feby 1867

No 425

Rec'd 11th Feby 1867
Ans 14th do.

Rec'd 13th February 1867
Rec'd from Colonial Secretary
Pro: of New Brunswick
Pro: of the Master Gen'l Dept
in the Colony. Dept