M.R.O. 1—77,006—8-6-31.

(1) Number of pages 12

(2) Date of repair 25-2-53

(3) Initials of the Referencer

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 837 Press ~~Mis.~~

424-25

Dated 19 3 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

By

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
19th March 1867.

No. 424. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department :—

Sanctioning the detention at Luckady of the E. Company of Sappers and Miners. } (Here enter 13th March 1867, No. 909.)

No. 425. ORDER THEREON, 19th March 1867, No. 837.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 31. Communicated to Captain Kennedy.

(True Extract.)

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

To Captain Kennedy.
To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following papers:—

From the Quarter Master General, Fort Saint George, 9th March 1867, No. 1941; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department.

Adverting to the 2nd paragraph of the Order of Government, dated 11th ultimo, No. 505, I have the honor, by order of the Commander-in-Chief, to suggest that a complete Company (the E) of the Sappers now at Luckady, be retained therein preference to leaving only a small party under the Command of a Jemadar. The other Company, the H, to return to Regimental Head Quarters.

2. With reference to this suggestion, I beg to enclose a memorandum from the Inspector General of Hospitals, who is of opinion that one Company might remain in Wynaad during the south-west monsoon without risk of sickness, provided that the men are properly housed, &c. *A.*

3. The question as to the advisability of this measure was referred to Captain Kennedy, in accordance with Doctor Mackenzie's suggestion—and that Officer's views thereon are also attached. It will be seen that he is entirely in favor of it. *B.*

4. There is not sufficient hutting accommodation at present at Bangalore for the two Companies, should both be ordered to re-join Regimental Head Quarters.

5. Colonel Hill, bearing in mind the experience of past years, does not concur in the proposal of retaining a complete Company at Luckady during the monsoon: and he suggests that the E Company, (less a Jemadar's party only to be left at Luckady) be employed at Coonoor or Coimbatore. But he adds that rather than bring more than the H Company to Bangalore, it would be preferable to leave the *entire* E Company at Luckady. In this opinion General Haines concurs. *C.*

6. Colonel Walker, Royal Engineers, reports that he can give no employment to Sappers at Coimbatore, and that there is not shelter for more than the present detachment on the Coonoor ghat. He could however give employment to a detachment of Sappers on the new road to Kotagherry, and he says that there are quarters available for 42 men at Wellington. *D.*

7. Under the circumstances abovementioned, His Excellency recommends that the E Company should be allowed to remain at Luckady during the next monsoon. It is desirable that the H Company should re-join Regimental Head Quarters as it is next for Foreign Service.

8. The early decision of Government is solicited to this reference, as immediate arrangements must be made if the Companies are to leave Luckady at the end of this month, as at present ordered.

A.

From the Inspector General of Hospitals, Madras, 1st March 1867; to the Deputy Quarter Master General, Fort Saint George.

In reply to your memorandum, No. 1158, I have the honor to state that from the knowledge obtained of the station of Luckady during my visit to it in January 1866, and from a perusal of the correspondence forwarded with your memorandum, I am of opinion that a complete Company of Sappers may be left there during the approaching hot and rainy seasons without much risk to the

health of the men, *provided* that they are removed from the damp low situation of the original lines to the more healthily located huts, close by the western opening of the pass which were occupied by the men of No. II Company at the time of my inspection; and that their hours of labor on the ghat works be restricted during the months of April, May and June to a few hours—say from ½ past 5 to ¼ past 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, and from 4 to 6 in the afternoon.

2. In this way, with attention to other arrangements of food, clothing, &c., I see no reason to fear an undue amount of sickness such as existed in 1865.

3. That year is spoken of by every person acquainted with the district as an exceptional one, and remarkable for its very high rate of sickness and mortality generally throughout the whole of the Wynaad country—as also in the Province of Malabar and Canara where alone upwards of 40,000 deaths were reported, on very reliable authority, to have occurred between the months of April and September.

4. I find that Assistant Apothecary Carey, who held medical charge of the working parties at the ghat for the three years previous to 1865, gives it as his opinion that "the outbreak of sickness," which led to the removal of the Sappers last year "was very unusual" and that "Wynaad was unprecedentally unhealthy" during that season; and in his sanitary report for the quarter ending 30th June 1865, he states his belief that "the want of warm clothes and the labor of descending or ascending the ghat with exposure to heavy showers of rain frequently for many hours together, were no doubt the exciting causes of much of the fever, &c, that prevailed."

5. The monsoon season is pronounced by Mr. Hester, a medical gentleman in the employment of the coffee planters in that district, as more favorable for recovery from fever than the low country, giving as his reason for this opinion that "fever almost entirely disappears when the monsoon has fairly set in"—and the Officer who Commanded the D Company at Luckady for four years states that "the monsoon time is *not sickly*."

6. The health reports of the small detachment left last year for the protection of the lines, led to the impression that the sickness from which they suffered was due more to the very unsanitary condition, in which they were circumstanced, than to climatic influences; if therefore it be considered desirable to have a larger party stationed there this year, the experiment may, I think, be safely tried under the conditions I have above stated.

7. I would, however, beg to suggest that Captain Kennedy, now in charge of the ghat works, and whose residence at Luckady has extended over, I believe, five or six years, be consulted on the subject.

8. This practical knowledge and experience of the influence of the several seasons on the health of the men would, I consider, be of especial value in determining the question of a safe residence or otherwise for a larger party this year.

B.

From the Special Executive Engineer, Wynaad, Luckady, 6th March 1867, No. 36; to the Quarter Master General, Madras.

With reference to your memorandum, No. 1738, dated 2nd March 1867, I beg to say that I see no more risk likely to attend the retention of the Company of Sappers at Luckady throughout the year, than would have to be incurred at any other station—a certain amount of fever will always undoubtedly occur, but as a set off against that, the place is entirely free from cholera, and some of the more severe forms of disease prevalent elsewhere; whilst, as regards the fever itself, its mild type may be judged from the fact that in seven years not a single Sapper has died from it; so that not only do I think that a full Company might be left (as far as it is possible to speak confidently on matters so beyond our control as unexpected epidemics) with perfect safety, but that no necessity actually exists for the removal of any part of the detachment.

2. The lines now occupied by the E Company are on the same site that the G Company was hutted at during 4 years, and during that time it only lost one man, his death being due to delirium tremens; also during the same period 11 men were sent away on sick leave of short terms; our experience, therefore, argues that they are the healthiest we have; the lines to which objection was before made, were those inhabited by D Company, when here, which have since been

all removed. If only one Company, the E, remains, I should decidedly recommend that they should remain where they now are, in preference to any change; but this is a matter which can be arranged as thought proper, the decision either way being immaterial so far as the Public Works Department is concerned. The Officer Commanding the E Company is not in favor of the change, and he informs me that the men do not want it, as the other lines being more in the gorge of the ghat are more exposed to rain and wind during the monsoon.

3. As regards the working hours, I would suggest a different arrangement to that proposed by the Inspector General—it is foggy and chilly on the ghat at the early hours that he names, with very heavy dew—I should say from 7 till 11, and from 2 till 5, would be better; both in the early morning, and in the afternoon, the part of the ghat where I should work the men is in shade, and I quite agree with Dr. ——— that it is the extreme heat that should be avoided; perhaps however the safest arrangement would be to leave the point to the Officer in Command, who would then have power to adapt the hours to circumstances, if merely informed as to what he should guard against.

4. I think not only was the season of 1865 an exceptionally unhealthy one, but that the strength of the men was more tried that year than in previous seasons. It was my rule in former seasons to leave off work at a distance from their lines in April; and to work the men on the upper portion of the ghat—that year, however, there had been a great deal of time lost in re-building the huts on their return from Coimbatore, and the Officer in Command was anxious to finish some work that was incomplete, and it being his first season in Wynaad, he was not so convinced as myself of the greater chances of sickness incurred by taking the men to work in the lower part of the ghat. That mistake would not be likely to have repeated.

5. So far as regards food, I will see that all necessary arrangements are made, and I shall be happy to carry out any other suggestions that may be thought necessary.

C.

Telegram from the Officer Commanding Bangalore, 1st March 1867; to the Quarter Master General, Madras.

Your telegram of to-day. Bearing in mind the experience of former years, Colonel Hill recommends arrangements proposed in his letter of twenty-third January, forwarded with my number forty of twenty-fourth being carried out. No larger party than a Jemadar's being left in Wynaad. Remainder of E Company to be employed at Coonoor if shelter is available, otherwise at Coimbatore. II Company only being brought to Bangalore. It would however be preferable to leave E Company altogether in Wynaad than to bring it to Bangalore, there being shelter only for H Company—in this I concur.

D.

From the Superintending Engineer 7th Division, Camp Cochin, 6th February 1867, No. 196; to the Deputy Quarter Master General, Fort Saint George.

I have the honor to note as follows on the subject of your docket No. 836 of 29th January, the enclosures of which are herewith returned.

Enclosures 2.

2. Coimbatore cannot be recommended as a monsoon station for any of the Sappers from Luckady, on account of the want of shelter and work for them. When Sappers were last sent there, I managed to employ them a good deal on the demolition of an old building, the site of which was wanted for a new Talook Cutcherry. But by next April a force of from 800 to 1,000 convicts will have occupied the new jail, and it will be more than we can do to employ them all, so that the Sappers will have no opportunity of earning any working pay.

3. All available accommodation at Coonoor and on the new ghat is taken up by the detachment of 42 men from the B Company. But at Wellington there are 3 ranges of good quarters capable of accommodating as many more, for whom I will gladly find employment on the new road to Kotagherry. If Lieutenant Colonel Hill could state exactly how many men he would wish quartered at Wellington from April till September, we might manage to increase the accommodation accordingly.

4. I have no longer any connection with the Wynaad works which are exclusively under Captain Kennedy's independent charge; but I take the opportunity of saying that if the Line Guard be increased at Luckady, the restrictions against their employment at the discretion of the Officer in charge of them, or of the works, should be removed. Otherwise I know it will be found preferable to maintain the lines by cooly labour. And the state of idleness to which the men of the Line Guard were condemned last monsoon by the restructions to which I allude, was very detrimental to discipline.

From the Officer Commanding Mysore Division, Head Quarters, Bangalore, 24th January 1867, No. 40; to the Quarter Master General, Head Quarters, Fort Saint George.

No. 33 of 21st Jan. 1687.
Requesting to be informed if the detachment Sappers and Miners in Wynaad is to be removed this year during the unhealthy months.

With reference to my letter as per margin, I have the honor to forward copy of letter No. 82 of 23rd instant, from the Officer Commanding Sappers and Miners, on the subject of the removal of the E and H Companies from the Wynaad during the unhealthy months of the year.

2. It will be observed that Colonel Hill suggests that the H Company only should be brought back to Bangalore, and that the E Company (minus a party to keep the huts in order of greater strength than that left behind last year) should be sent to Coimbatore or to Coonoor. Should this arrangement meet with His Excellency's approval, I would request permission at once to place myself in communication with the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, in view to shelter being provided for the men.

From the Commandant Sappers and Miners, Bangalore, 23rd January 1867, No. 82; to the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, Mysore Division.

In reply to your dockets Nos. 300 and 322, respectively of the 21st and 22nd instant, I have the honor to report, for the information of the Major General, that on the "D" Company embarking for Port Blair (probably in April next) I shall have no further use for the old 14th Lines, unless the whole of the Wynaad detachment is again sent to Bangalore during the monsoon, a course which I would by no means recommend.

By April next there is every prospect of my having sufficient cover for an additional Company in the new lines. These blocks are intended for the "C" Company on its arrival from Port Blair, but as the Company probably will not reach Bangalore until May, and the men will then avail themselves of the usual furlough granted on return from foreign service, the huts will be available for the "H" Company (now at Luckady) which stands first on the roll for foreign service.

The C Company will have assembled again about the time the next working season commences in Wynaad, and can go into the lines vacated by the "G" Company which I presume will be employed there, leaving the H Company at Regimental Head Quarters to be prepared for its tour of foreign Service; at least this appears to me the most convenient course and which I would recommend for the favorable consideration of His Excellency the Commar in-Chief. The "E" Company still remains to be provided for, and although for, the reason. have always urged, I would not recommend that any large body of men be located in the Wynaad during the unhealthy and rainy seasons—I am also strongly of opinion that a move to Bangalore without proper cover is equally to be avoided both on sanitary grounds and those of discipline.

During the season of 1863-64, the men did very well at Coimbatore where they were much nearer the Wynaad, and their transit to and fro was consequently not nearly so expensive as it was last season when sent to Bangalore—but I believe the place they could be most usefully employed on during the monsoon, would be the new Coonoor ghat and other roads on the Neilgherries, if the Superintending Engineer can manage to find temporary shelter for the increased strength of the detachment.

The number of men who remained last year in Wynaad was not sufficient to keep the lines in thorough repair, and I would suggest that this season the party be at least doubled in strength so that on return after the rains, the time of the men may not be taken up in making heavy repairs to their huts. The exact number might be decided in communication with Colonel Walker.

If the E Company are again sent to Bangalore they will be obliged to live about in the bazaar or again occupy the old 14th Lines—these huts are in a very delapidated state already, and certainly

cannot stand the rains of another season—the Major General will remember that a very large amount of sickness lately occurred amongst the men who were located in the bazaar as well as in these lines.

ORDER, No. 909, 13th March 1867.

Sanctioned as recommended in paragraph 7 of the foregoing letter.

(True Extract.)

Hamilton *Colonel,*
Deputy Secretary to Government.

To the Quarter Master General, with six enclosures.
,, Adjutant General.
,, Controller of Military Accounts.
,, Inspector General Indian Medical Department,
,, Public Works Department,
,, Commissary General,
} for information.

× with 10 spare copies.

P.V. 1867 Detd
Commandg Officers Steamers

List

837

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837

Commd

Capt Kennedy —

Fort St George
19th March 1867

Capt Kennedy

Sept 20/67

Recd. 1867 Dec.
Proc. of Court for alteration
of 986.
Ex. at the Madras Genl
in the Mily. Depts

Dy 13. } March 67
Recd 18. }

No 909.

Exd. J. E. Cashart.

Sanctioning the detention
at Luckaty of the E Comps
of Sappers & Miners.

No. 837 - 19th March 1867

William Peel

No 424-425