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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 333

Press
Misr

650-51

Dated 31

1868.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
31st January 1868.

No. 650. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Revenue Department:—

Passing orders on a letter from the Conservator
of Forests regarding Mr. Lowry's lease of
certain forests on the Annamallays in the } (Here enter 23rd January 1868, No. 197:)
Coimbatore District.

No. 651. ORDER THEREON, 31st January 1868, No. 333.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 87.

Communicated to the Superin-
tending Engineer of the 7th Division.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.

F. R. Bantleman,

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
23rd January 1868.*

No. 395. Read the following letter from the Officiating Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Camp at Ootacamund, 20th December 1867, No. 437:—

1. Referring to the Government Order, No. 2,517, of the 25th of October last, I have the honor to forward a letter from Mr. Lowry.

2. Mr. Lowry states that he is willing to undertake the formation of roads towards the higher ranges of the Annamallays and timber felling operations, on a salary of Rupees 500 a month, to be raised after one year to 600 Rupees. In the event of his giving up all claim to the forests, he claims compensation as follows:—

	RS.
1. Cost of tracing and constructing road up to date ...	7,500
2. Superintendence, salary for self for 12 months at Rupees 500 ...	6,000
3. Cost of felling and cutting up 10,000 tons of timber at Rupees 3 per ton ...	3,000
4. Plant ...	2,000
5. Buildings ...	1,000
6. Compensation for loss of time, interest, and loss of profit ...	5,000
	24,500

Items Nos. 2 and 6 are excessive. I cannot give an opinion of the value of done in tracing the ghaut road (Item No. 1), but when lately up the slopes, the ghaut trace was so overgrown as to be quite invisible; a good deal of blasting has been done near the top of the ghaut, but none, I believe, on the lower five miles. In the event of Government taking over the road, I conclude that the Engineer's department will inspect and report upon the value of the work performed. Item No. 3 is reasonable, but it would not pay to bring down the timber until the ghaut road is finished; if this is done, and a cart road made from the foot of the ghaut to Cotoor (the present tract is impassable for laden bandies), it could be brought to Coimbatore at a very small profit. I do not know what is included in Items Nos. 4 and 5.

3. Mr. Lowry is an Engineer, and was for a long time in the Department Public Works. If Government are desirous of making a road towards the higher ranges, his services are available for this work, and he is inured to the climate; if this road was extended on beyond the Ponachy valley, a very fine valley situated between the Pachepal-mallay and Akka ridges could be opened out; this contains much fine shola forest land, well adapted for coffee, and much more sheltered than the land now being opened above the Ponachy water-fall. On the higher ranges there is an immense extent of land available for Tea and Chinchona, and a road all the way up is well worth the consideration of Government.

4. Communications as far as the Ponachy valley can hardly be completed within a year, and it would be useless to commence any timber operations until there are roads; the timber which has been already felled by Mr. Lowry, and which remains above ghaut, should be carefully stored and preserved from fire; the Coimbatore market is well supplied with Teak and Blackwood just at present, the Anna-

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
23rd January 1868.*

mallays and the Sholakarry forests being more than equal to the demand, and able to supply it cheaper, so that it will not, I think, be expedient to work these forests to any greater extent than bringing out the ripe trees and the fallen timber, which was the object I had in view when I gave Mr. Lowry his contract.

5. Mr. Lowry's sanguine estimate of the value of these forests is quite at variance with the estimates of Dr. Cleghorn and myself.

6. It will never pay to bring down the Vengay or other jungle timbers as long as the market is as distant as it now is. Mr. Lowry is wrong in supposing that I ever even verbally agreed to give him the Vengay; when he applied for the Teak and Blackwood he informed me that he did not think any jungle timbers would pay the carriage to market.

7. Mr. Lowry is quite correct in observing that he was the pioneer of this portion of the Annamallays.

No. 396. ORDER THEREON, 23rd January 1868, No. 197.

Forests, No. 16.

1. It appears to Government that Mr. Lowry somewhat misapprehends the position of affairs.

2. In 1865 he obtained a lease of certain forests on the Annamallays on certain conditions, including that of *personal supervision*, and also the grant of the land through which to make a road from his estate on those hills to the low country, ~~with permission to put a toll on it.~~ Government expressly reserving to themselves "the right to assume possession, control and management of the road at any time" at their option, paying to Mr. Lowry the cost of construction."

3. In June of last year Mr. Lowry "not having funds to carry out his proposed operations," addressed Dr. Cleghorn on the subject of a projected Annamallay Timber Company to be established on the basis of his lease, but the Government declined to relax the special condition of personal supervision on which the lease was granted, and which is manifestly not compatible with the establishment of a Company.

4. Presuming, however, that Mr. Lowry's object was to obtain the means of completing the road to his estate, the Government offered to exercise their option of taking over the road, in view to its completion to the head of the ghaut, provided that Mr. Lowry would relinquish his lease of the timber, and they at the same time authorized the Conservator of Forests to bring forward his proposals for working the forests on account of Government if Mr. Lowry resigned his lease, and employing Mr. Lowry in the department as he had suggested.

5. Captain Beddome now states that Mr. Lowry is willing to take service under Government for employment on the formation of the road and timber operations, on a salary of Rupees 500 monthly, to be raised to Rupees 600 after one year, but he adds that it would be useless to commence any timber operations till the road is made.

6. He also forwards a letter from Mr. Lowry, asking Rupees 13,500 as the cost of the road-work done, including payment for his own services, and a total further sum of Rupees 11,000 as the cost of felling certain timber now in the forests, the value of certain plant and buildings, and compensation for loss of time, interest,

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23rd January 1868.*

and loss of profit, the payment being claimed in consideration of his relinquishing the lease.

7. The claim on account of the road-work may be perfectly reasonable; but the Government cannot decide upon it without first obtaining the opinion of the Superintending Engineer after he has personally inspected the work done, which he will be instructed to do so soon as the Government receive a definite acceptance by Mr. Lowry of the terms offered.

8. The claim to compensation for relinquishing a lease which Mr. Lowry stated he had not funds to work, and in consideration of his relinquishing which the Government proposed to take over the road, re-paying him the cost, and to complete it to the head of the ghaut above which his estate is situated, appears to Government to be somewhat unreasonable; but in consideration of the value of the timber felled, they are willing to pay him Rupees 5,000 on the cancelment of his lease, the timber in question becoming the property of Government.

9. Captain Beddome will communicate this offer to Mr. Lowry, and forward his reply to Government.

10. The question of Mr. Lowry's employment, whether on the road or in working the forest for Government, must rest with the Superintending Engineer or the Forest Conservator. It is not a matter in which Government can intervene.

(True Extract.)

Secretary to Government.

To the Officiating Conservator of Forests.
,, the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

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Jan 29/7

18:40 to 18:50
Dec 20/7

21 23 24
Dec 24/7
Jan 19/7

Preparing notes on a letter
from the Conservator of
Forests regarding
the Young's leave of absence
for work on the same
matters in the
Catalpa St.
No 333-312 Jan 2/78
Wt are the

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Comm & the
Supt Engineer
of the Y. Rev.

Jan 15/78
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