

(1) Number of pages _____

(2) Date of repair _____

(3) Initials of the Referencer _____

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.**Government of Madras.***Public Works* **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1938

Press

~~Mis.~~

307-308

Dated

15-6-

1869.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
15th June 1869.

No. 307. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the
Military Department:—

Recording observations on a letter from the
Executive Engineer in Wynaad, passing stric-
tures on the conduct of the Detachment of (Here enter 25th May 1869, No. 1,967.)
Sappers and Miners employed at that place

No. 308. ORDER THEREON, 15th June 1869, No. 1,938.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 35.

COMMUNICATED to Major Kennedy
for information and guidance.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,

Secretary to Government.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Military Department.

25th May 1869.

Read the following papers:—

No 657. From the Quarter Master General, to the Officiating Secretary to Government, Military Department, Fort Saint George; dated Head Quarters, Coonoor, 8th May 1869, No ⁵⁸/₃₄₃₁.

I have the honor, by order, to request you will be good enough to lay before

Government the accompanying letter*

*30th April 1869, No 55.

from the Executive Engineer in Wynaad

to the address of the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, Mysore Division.

2.* The Commander-in-Chief considers that the whole tenor of this communication is very objectionable.

3. It is not competent to Major Kennedy to comment on the qualifications of the Officers whom the Head of the Army selects for the command of Companies of the Corps of Sappers and Miners; nor is it within his province to enter into matters connected with discipline, and impute to the Officers of the Corps neglect of duty, incompetency, and inexperience; much less is he warranted in alleging or, at least, insinuating—unless he is prepared to prove it—that the public money has been grossly wasted through their carelessness and want of supervision. If the Executive Engineer has any complaint to make against the Sappers, His Excellency conceives that he should address Government on the subject, and state specifically the nature of his charges against the Officers, when the usual and proper course of instituting formal inquiry into their conduct would undoubtedly be adopted and they would have an opportunity of defending themselves.

4. Lieutenant-General McCleverty cannot but express his surprise that Major Kennedy, after having had the valuable services of the Sappers for so many years, and effected so much through their help in the important work upon which he has been engaged, should now evince so little appreciation of the work of this efficient Corps. This is but a poor return to make for good services rendered; and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief suggests, for the consideration of Government, whether it is expedient that any portion of the Corps should hereafter be employed under an Officer of the Public Works Department who holds it in such low estimation, and who, apparently, does not consider that the public get their money's worth in the work done by the men.

5. With these remarks His Excellency submits Major Kennedy's letter for such notice as the Right Honorable the Governor in Council may consider called for.

6. The Officer Commanding Mysore Division has communicated the last paragraph of the Executive Engineer's letter to the Medical Department, and Major Kennedy's disparaging remarks on the qualifications of the Medical Subordinates in Wynaad will no doubt be duly noticed by the Inspector-General.

From the Special Executive Engineer, Wynaad, to the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, Mysore Division, Bangalore; dated Luckade, 30th April 1869, No 55.

In reply to your letter of the 27th instant, No. 1026, I have the honor to inform you that the repairs therein referred to have been completed; in fact on the day that the Officer in Command of the Detachment wrote, materials were at site; and as Captain Elliot was aware of this, he should have mentioned it, and saved this reference. As regards the lines, I have to complain of the carelessness of the Sappers in both the manner of building their huts, and the want of supervision in keeping them in proper repair. The lines built by myself when in Command of the Detachment, were put up without any assistance from the Public Works Department; were done in less than

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Military Department,
25th May 1869*

one-third the time now taken for the same work, *with the assistance of as much hired labor as may be asked for*, they lasted also for upwards of four years, with merely slight annual repairs; while those now put up have to be almost entirely renewed every year. The hired labor at my disposal is of an inferior description, or I should not require the presence of Sappers at all, and I am necessarily obliged to leave all work requiring any skill, or care, to the Sappers; my experience with the Corps now extends over fifteen years nearly, nine of which I did actual duty with it, and to meet any objection that may be raised about obliging the men to erect, and keep in repair, the buildings intended for their use, I beg to say that such has been the invariable custom, the men receiving working pay while so employed.

2 Under these circumstances, as I have no authority of any description to compel either proper supervision, or good work, I cannot consent to take responsibility which should lay with the Officer in Command, and I consider I have good cause for complaint when after so heavy an expenditure as is annually incurred on the lines, and other buildings required for the Detachment, that public money should be so grossly wasted as it is. I beg to add that the lines are regularly repaired once a year, and my experience proves that, *when properly done*, such repair is ample; the greater part of the men's houses were re-thatched within the last six months, and if they are leaky, it is the fault of the Sapper Officer, who ought to have exercised stricter supervision in the matter; and Officers should not be sent here who are not competent to judge whether work is properly done or not. My duties are too multifarious and onerous to permit me to supply their want of experience.

3. The proper time for repairs to be executed is just previous to the monsoon, but of late the practice that has arisen of taking away a company just at that time, and so obliging the lines wanted by them to be left incomplete till required by the succeeding company has led to a contrary course, and when the rainy season comes on further repairs are needed, as the thatch falls into disrepair, partly owing to an utter absence of periodical inspections, and timely conservancy; and a great deal owing to the thatch being destroyed by the numbers of poultry kept by the men. The rains in March and April are generally merely a few desultory, though heavy showers, and it is not advisable to commence repairs till near the time when water-tight houses are most required, besides which, I have invariably been kept in such a state of uncertainty as to whether any or the whole detachment would be removed, and when, that it has made me hesitate in laying out public money, and taking up valuable time for possibly no use at all. This year had I ever thought it advisable, I could not, for want of funds, have carried out any re-building before the current month, besides which, it would have been sheer waste to have done so when I had myself proposed the early and permanent reduction of the strength of the detachment by one company, in order that the materials of their lines might be utilized for the repairs of those of the company left behind. I beg to add that if the Commandant of Sappers can find me twenty-five picked tradesmen, with a good energetic Native Officer, and the proper complement of Non-Commissioned Officers, I would willingly dispense with a larger number, as in a whole company I find that many men are simply supernumeraries, little better than the labor that can be hired. This course would enable me to have the men much better housed, and I believe be attended with the very best results. I have already broached the subject to Lieutenant-Colonel Prendergast demi-officially, and there ought to be no difficulty in furnishing me the tradesmen I have named, as they are of the ordinary description most common in a Sapper Company.

4 In conclusion, I have the honor to represent the great imprudence that has been shown in leaving the station at *this* season without competent medical aid. I have never ceased urging at every possible opportunity the necessity of a good Apothecary being always here; and I am positive that three-fourths of the illness is due to the incompetency of the subordinates who have been left with this responsible charge. At this moment the station is without any effective Medical Officer, the Third Class Hospital Assistant attached to the Sappers has gone away sick; and though I have always desired the subordinate doing duty with my department to give such aid as might be necessary to the Sappers, he also is laid up with illness, and cannot perform his duties. At the best of times he is of little use, and I have frequent complaints as to his habits, &c. The Major-General will, I think, agree that this is not an advisable state of matters.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Military Department,
25th May 1869.*

No. 658.

ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1869, No. 1967.

The Right Honorable the Governor in Council having perused the letter addressed by the Executive Engineer in Wynaad, to the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General, Mysore Division, and submitted for the orders of Government by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, feels himself constrained to express his disapproval of the tone which Major Kennedy has adopted in passing strictures on the conduct of the Corps with which he has been so long acting in concert on the public service. Before, however, proceeding to pass further orders on the case, the Right Honorable the Governor in Council thinks it right to give Major Kennedy the opportunity of explaining, and, if he thinks it right, of retracting the expressions, of which he has made use, which should be done through the Office of the Quarter Master General.

(Signed) A. T. WILDE, Colonel,
Offg. Secretary to Government.

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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Military Department,
25th May 1869.*

Read the following letter:—

No. 657. From the Quarter Master General.

Forwarding, for orders, a letter from the Executive Engineer in Wynaad commenting on the conduct of the Detachment of Sappers and Miners employed at that place. } Here enter 8th May 1869, No. ⁵⁹₈₄₃₁.

No. 658 ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1869, No. 1967.

The Right Honorable the Governor in Council having perused the letter addressed by the Executive Engineer in Wynaad, to the Deputy Assistant Quarter Master General Mysore Division, and submitted for the orders of Government by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, feels himself constrained to express his disapproval of the tone which Major Kennedy has adopted in passing strictures on the conduct of the Corps with which he has been so long acting in concert on the public service. Before, however, proceeding to pass further orders on the case, the Right Honorable the Governor in Council thinks it right to give Major Kennedy the opportunity of explaining, and, if he thinks it right, of retracting the expressions, of which he has made use, which should be done through the Office of the Quarter Master General.

(True Extract.)

A. M. M.

Colonel.

Offg. Secretary to Government.

To the Quarter Master General

*In Public Works Dept.
with 4 spare copies.*

1938-155 June 19
Bout. of 1869: 2011 m. 1869.

1938-155 June 19
MILITARY. 119

To
THE QUARTER MASTER GENERAL.

Dated May, 25th.

Recd. 1938-155 June 19
Incl. 1

G. O., 25th May 1869, No. 1967.

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MAY.

Nos. 657-658.

Recording observations on a letter from the
Executive Engineer in Wynad passing strictures
on the conduct of the Detachment of Sappers and
Miners employed at that place

No 1938-155 June 19

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PUBLIC WORKS.

Dated

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Encl.

G O 15 June 1869, No 1438

Nos. 317-318

Coppers and Miners Pro: Mich.
Department relative to the tone
which Major Hermedy adopted
in passing strictures on the
conduct of the Corps of Coppers
and Miners employed in the
Mynard communicated to the
Officer concerned.